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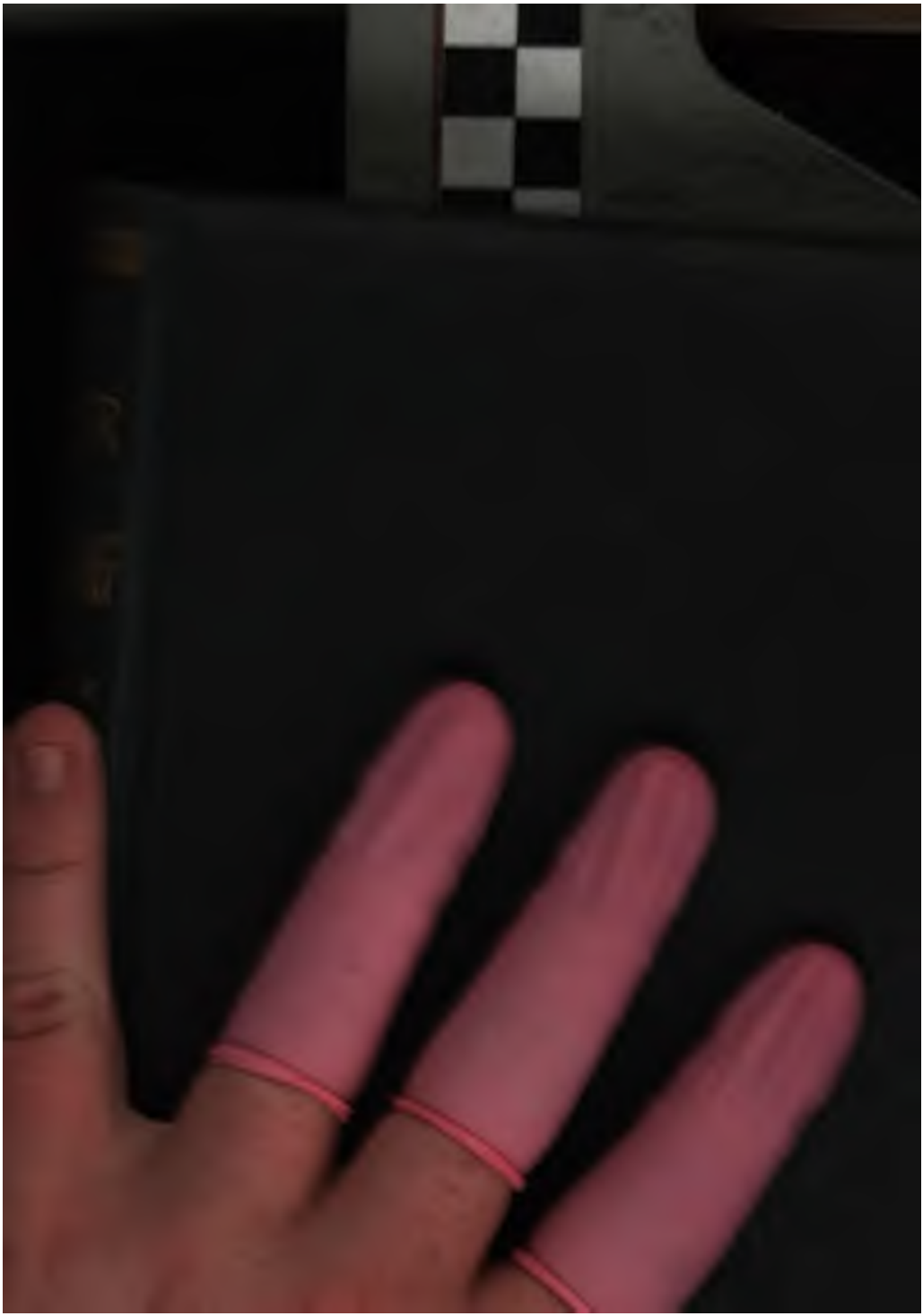

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THE

MASTER OF RED LEAF.

CHAPTER I.

MY INDISCRETION.

I THOUGHT I was succeeding in my effort to master my passion, to concentrate my thoughts and energies on the great cause for which I had come to this clime. Jim was an apt pupil. One-eyed Sampson, whom Jim assured me it was entirely safe to trust, was also my pupil, but not so bright as Jim.

Full of the fever of my theme, one unfortunate Sabbath as I was eloquently instructing a circle of negro men on their *right* to freedom, taking for my text Jefferson's immortal words, "All

men are born free and equal," a soft touch on my shoulder made me start.

I felt myself turning to stone, as I met the grave eyes of Gertrude Gordon.

Fear paralysed my tongue. I well knew, in Southern opinion, there was no worse crime than preaching freedom to negroes. Freedom to slaves in the South meant midnight assassination; meant the uprising of a half-barbarous race; meant murder, and rape, and fire.

I stood silent, still as stone. She looked at me quietly for a second, then spoke. Her manner was severely cold.

"We have been under the impression, Miss Stanhope," she said, her deep eyes full on my fainting face, "that you desired to give our servants *religious* instruction. Is this I have just heard *your* idea of religion?"

She waited as if for a reply. I spoke not, I could not have spoken had millions depended on it. My tongue clove to my mouth, which was absolutely dry with the great dread upon me—

the dread of losing all for which I had long laboured, the dread of the scorn, the contumely, these proud people would fling upon me.

I was ready to sink, I trembled and shook. A sort of contemptuous pity began to move her. After a minute's consideration she said:

"When you are quite through with your school, Miss Stanhope, be so good as to come to my room."

She left me, and I felt as though an earthquake was about to roll under my feet.

In what must I seek safety? To what cling for support? Where find escape from the power of these people? Would she invoke the law to punish me? Or would I be handed over to that sterner jury, the mob, and that stern judge—Lynch?

Yet, what had I done to make me feel such terror? What crime committed that I should tremble for my place, my life? I had spoken to an enslaved people words of freedom; for this the law might seize me, and the popular scorn

overwhelm. What mockery to call this a land of freedom! No wonder Wendell Philips snapped his fingers in the Union's face, and boldly said "It was a compact with death and a league with hell." No wonder the stars and stripes of the American flag were called "a flaunting lie."

I went straight to Miss Gordon's room. The door was open. She was standing before her harp, singing to the melancholy music her fingers swept from the strings.

Seeing me, she slightly bowed her beautiful head toward a chair, and went on with her song. Could I wonder Lynn Devaseur loved her? Could I wonder, borrowing the extravagant words of the poet, he had bade her feel—

> "—— lying under the palms of her feet
> The heart of his heart, beating harder with pleasure,
> To feel her tread it to dust and to death?"

To what other mortal on this muddy earth could such a man as the Master have uttered those lines? The palms of what other feet than

hers were worthy to touch a high heart like his?

As I looked on her there singing, I—lost, wrecked creature—could but admire and marvel at her perfection of being—marvel with a bitter sense of my own poverty of gifts.

He had said to her—

"*One splendid spirit, your soul and mine.*"

Beneath the broad heavens could there be found a spirit equal to the perfect ONE those two would form?

I knew all this. I felt all this as no other creature could, yet I hated her for it.

Oh! accursed of God was I! In what other human breast were thus blended qualities so incongruous? What other human being, at the same time, possessed the most full, quick, ardent, and exquisite appreciation of the lofty and the lovely, with the most bitter, mean, and ignoble hatred for the being so blessed?

And over all the hatred and the admiration

presided the keen consciousness of the baseness of that hatred, a self-scorn for the meanness of my nature.

Every grace I ardently admired furnished food for gnawing envy, stimulants for raging jealousy. And I was powerless to subdue these torturing feelings. They mastered me like a lunacy.

Stone-like I sat before her, my leaden eyes drinking in the beauty of her splendid presence —the picture she made with her silken white robe trailing on the carpeted floor, her dark hair a crown to her head, her eyes luminous as stars (the very soul of love lay in them), her bare arms, perfect even to the tips of her ivory fingers, going over the strings of the golden harp with slow grace of motion.

Wrong! Could mortal endure a more galling wrong than *I* endured sitting there a culprit, pale, pinched, pallid with fear, before the warm splendour of her perfect person? Call it jealousy, envy, hate, what name you will, I only know the misery it caused me was a torturing reality.

Her grace, her beauty, her royal air, her starry eyes, her crown of hair, her sculptured arms, her silken robe, the carpeted floor, the gilded harp, every show and sign of wealth, all and each, my whole soul revolted at as an outrage and wrong and insult.

An insult to my poverty, my plain person, my hard hands, my sheenless hair, my leaden eyes, my angular form, my dependent position. An outrage against all my past life; souless, hopeless as it was; loveless, drudging, dragging as it had been.

If there was no wrong in this dreadful inequality, whence the keen feeling of wrong? Whence the rebellion in my heart at the difference in our gifts and station? Why had fortune, or fate, or God given to *her* all good things, to *me* all bad? If He could mercilessly make this cruel difference here on earth, what may we look for in the world to come? He may send *her* on to a heaven of eternal joy, and *me* to eternal torment; what is it to him! Then a new thought

struck me—RETRIBUTION! Heaven would open for those who found no heaven on earth; and even now, was not Retribution overshadowing this woman? With the gall and wormwood of my soul mingled one keen joy—*I* heard the yelping of war's dogs; *I* knew when they were loosed they would rush down on this devoted land; *I* knew their coming would scatter her slaves, would slay her people, would devour her substance, desolate her home, tear off her silken robe, drag her down to the dirt, turn to wild wailing the music of her golden harp, would wrap her, and lap her, and steep her to the lips in the mire and misery of want and woe.

The thought of all this mixed joy with my humility and pain. I said to my heart, "Be still! *your* time is coming."

Her song ceased; the pathos of the music yet lingered in her dewy eyes as she turned them on me. Mine sank to the floor.

She expressed astonishment at what she had heard me say to the negroes. Had I entertained

such sentiments when fresh from New England she would have felt less surprise; but that one of my superior intelligence, after several years' acquaintance with negro nature, negro mind, should so little understand their needs as to urge on them high tenets of liberty, as to fancy they were ready for social or political equality with the white race, was indeed to her a matter of surprise and regret.

"You may think it your duty, Miss Stanhope," she said in conclusion, "to sow the seeds of disaffection and discontent in our servants' hearts, to fire them to insurrection, but it is our plain duty to avert so fearful a catastrophe. Though your offence is forbidden by law, I will not appeal to the law. You may quietly return to your home in the North, where your teachings will be comparatively harmless."

This sentence, though milder than I had anticipated, was ruinous to every hope, blasting to every plan. Its very mildness encouraged me to hope for full pardon. Banishment was worse

Roman Catholic cross to which I put my lips when I made the promise. Even at the moment I doubted if the book and the cross of that idolatrous Church did not dissolve and destroy the binding power of my promise.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAR PANORAMA.

I LEFT her presence. I sought the solitude of my own chamber. Though I had won a pardon, the price I paid for it was gall and wormwood. With tenfold bitterness I hated my pardoner. It was cruel, the intensity of hate that filled me.

I looked in the glass at my face: it was ghastly as though a hell lay open before me. O God! felt I not a hell seething in my soul? My tongue was dry, my lips livid. I sat down to hold myself still, to seek assuagement of my pangs by gloating over the ruin I *felt* was coming to this accursed South.

So vividly did this dreadful ruin spread itself out in a vast panorama before my *clair-voyant* eyes, as the dusk and silence of night came on,

that I started up to gaze on it from the window, and I clapped my hands and laughed aloud at the sight.

And what did that dreadful panorama show?

It showed *Scenes of War.* WAR—the great demon that was about to desolate the land.

I saw scenes that happened almost every day during the four years' war on the South; scenes that happened in every State, perhaps in every county in the South, even as far westward as the red man's untamed territory.

I saw—*slaves scattered, houses in flames, wild-eyed women and weeping children, houseless, hungry, cold, fleeing from armed men in blue.*

I saw—*fields laid waste, and dead cattle on the wayside rotting.*

I saw—*ten thousand homes in ashes, and over the ruins* charred chimneys stood sentinel.

I saw—*desolation, and woe, and despair spread over the South.*

And I saw—*battle-fields and bleeding men, and dogs of* WAR *lapping human blood!*

I clapped my hands and laughed aloud at the sight! Now was my prayer answered. *Now* was the downfall of this people near at hand. At last—*at last* were the leashes loosed and the dogs of war on the track of slavemasters, on the track of this detested woman!

Under my breath, lest rebels should hear, I spurred on the dogs.

"*Hurrah! On! on! Catch! tear! devour! Let her fate be the fate of Jezebel! Grant my prayer, O Lord!*"

CHAPTER III.

THE SECRET DISCOVERED.

LYNN DEVASEUR, the dreamer, the idealist, the student, had nerved himself to the uncongenial task of training for a soldier's life. Although his whole nature was averse to war, although his reason told him the South would lose in the contest, would go down in ruin, his sense of duty and honour bade him link his fortunes with his native State, and do battle in her defence.

He set himself to the study of military tactics. All other books were laid aside, and this forced business as diligently pursued as though he saw before him a Bonaparte's career.

He raised a company of men, and equipped them at his own expense. They were called the "Gordon Guards." The Master was elected

colonel of the Guards. A silken banner, embroidered by the two cousins, was presented by Miss Clara to the company, who received it with a grand flourish of treasonable talk.

The company expected to leave in a few days for active service. The Master was gone to the city to complete some arrangements preparatory to his departure. I had persistently avoided the presence of the lovers since the scene that occurred on the night the books were received. Since these two were one spirit, what still kept them apart? I had imagined a marriage would take place before he left for the war: he was on the very eve of leaving, and there seemed no sign of marriage. What was the obstacle? What stumblingblock was in the way? *I* could see none, yet something kept them severed.

It happened, while the Master was absent in the city, the ladies of Red Leaf went off to spend the day at the Pickard place. I had been invited to go, the two children were going, but declined on the plea of headache.

During the forenoon, as I was passing Miss Gordon's chamber door, which stood open, a sudden impulse made me enter. I had never been in this room but that one time when I put my lips to the cross and promised what I knew I would not perform.

The memory of that scene came back with all its force. I looked around on the elegance and grace of the apartment with something of the same bitterness I had then felt.

Two portraits were on the wall—life-size portraits of her father and mother. They were both very handsome, the latter wonderfully lovely, and very like her daughter. With such progenitors, it was hardly possible Miss Gordon could be anything but the rare beauty she was.

Though on entering the chamber no definite purpose had moved me, some devil darted one into my brain as I caught sight of a small bunch of keys in a steel ring on a desk. It was but the work of a moment to fit one of these

keys to a drawer, to take thence a number of letters from a package, the hand-writing of which I knew too well.

These letters were from the Master of Red Leaf to her.

Putting them in my pocket, I left the room and locked myself in my own chamber.

Ah! those moralists are not far wrong when they affirm every evil that man commits brings its own punishment. If the theft of those letters was a baseness, with what exquisite fineness was every fibre of my being wrung for it! Every word in the letters was an instrument of torture, for every word was love to *her*. *His* soul was sent forth to *hers*. Its purity, passion, power, tenderness, and sweetness were such as I knew only *he* could possess; and all this wealth was poured forth for *her* acceptance. And I, tortured as I was, read on. I *could* not stop—a fatal fascination forced me to gloat over what made my misery. I saw all this treasure of love laid at *her* feet—*I*, who would have died for one clasp

of his hand; *I*, who would have felt rich on the crumbs he cast to his dog!

I discovered from these epistles the nature of the obstacle that kept these lovers from a closer union. That obstacle was—*Kinship*.

I could but look on it with wonder—with something like contempt. So insignificant, so trifling a thing to stand in the way of a great love!

She had set up this obstacle. Did it not show the weakness of her love? Was it worthy *his?*

I would have vaulted barriers mountain high to have met *his* love, and *she* stood still at this straw!

I gathered from the letters that Miss Gordon's father had held very serious objections to the marriage of first cousins; had indoctrinated his idolised daughter with his opinions on this, as on all other subjects. He had won from her a promise never to wed a blood relative—a promise readily given at that time: her heart was free. She had not then seen her cousin Lynn since

early childhood. It was during the tour through Europe that a change from cousinly to a divine love stole upon their unsuspecting hearts. Mr. Gordon died before this love was known or confessed. In the first flood of grief for her father, she utterly refused to hear of it, and banished her lover from her side.

Lynn returned to his mother, leaving his two cousins in Europe. Returned, but not in despair. He was not a man to despair. These letters contained at once the passionate outpourings of love and the arguments of reason. He had set himself to study the question of consanguinity. Statistics were consulted, and many old-time ideas attacked. His reasoning was masterly, and his premises based on statements made by the learned and the scientific. But was all this needed?

Was it not enough that she loved him? Was it not enough that in all the world there was not another like him? What was a promise made to the dead compared to a living love? What a mountain of straw to a consuming fire?

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOGS ARE LOOSED.

THE war was begun in earnest. No longer could it be said, "Nobody is hurt." After every battle a wail went up from women in the North and women in the South. The Master had gone to the front with his company of gay, gallant young men. Alas! the mothers and sisters of these youths had no gaiety in their hearts. A great shadow seemed resting over their lives. These women, who never before in their lives had done one day's work, now went to their daily spinning and weaving with their slave women—spinning and weaving clothes for rebel soldiers.

After New Orleans fell under Federal control, and General Butler was established in command

over the city, postal communication with Confederates was cut off from the Red Leaf place, and in a few weeks was re-established with the North, and New Orleans was once more under the United States Government.

Letters from my Northern friends came pouring in, the gist of all which urged me to abandon my situation, my employment in a rebel family, and take a decided stand on the side of Loyalty and the Union.

A letter from my brother came from New Orleans. He was a private in a company, and, when he wrote, was doing duty in an hospital. It was the latter part of his letter that struck deepest.

"By the way," he added carelessly, after finishing his gossip, "we've got a lot of sick and wounded rebs here, and among 'em is a fellow like enough to die. On his shirts I see the name *Lynn Devaseur*. It struck my fancy because it's the name of the people you live with. Do you know anything of him? He is wounded and

sick with a fever. I guess he'll make a die of it."

Wounded and a prisoner! sick and like to die!

These words filled the world, they wrote themselves across the whole sky! To go to him, to nurse him back to life, or wait on him to the grave's brink, was the one longing of my heart. How could this be effected; I would not give this news to the members of the family. I jealously hugged it in my own heart; even in death I would fight for his possession. I *felt* this was *my* chance—*mine* to hold and to have all to myself the object of my love. From the first I resolved to go to him; the only difficulty was an excuse that would raise no suspicions. Up and down my chamber floor I paced, tortured by anxiety, tortured by impatience. Sick in a military hospital, only rude soldiers about him. Every moment lost endangered his life.

I hurriedly packed a small trunk with such garments as I would most need. What should

I say? what excuse give for my departure? At last a light broke upon me; it was so simple, I only wondered I had not seen it at the first moment.

I went straight down to Mrs. Devaseur. I told her that I had just received a letter from my young brother; he was very ill in New Orleans; I desired leave to go and nurse him.

The leave was granted without hesitation. A negro man was sent to the river-landing to signal the first steamer going to the city.

In less than an hour a message came to me that the boat was coming. My trunk was carried out. I went to the landing and waited in what patience I might. *I* saw no sign of an approaching steamer; but the negro, more accustomed to watch, pointed to a light, fleecy-looking cloud away up the river, and pronounced it "smoke from her chimlys."

I sat on the trunk, my eyes fixed on that light, fleecy cloud with a great dread that it might prove only a cloud. There were days

when a number of boats passed, going down and up the river; then, again, there were days when none went by. The negro was very confident, he declared.

"*He* warn't no fool; he know'd smoke of chimlys from clouds far as he could see. If dat warn't no boat, den *he* warn't no nigger!"

And even as he spoke, around the point of land three miles distant we saw the boat coming. A feeling of triumphant joy filled me. *I* should be with him—*I* only—day and night, fighting against the death hungry for him. *I* should smooth his pillow, and give him drinks, and lift his head, and watch him as he slept—and *she* would be far away. In my agitation I looked back at the house which held my rival. She was slowly coming across the lawn toward me.

There was now no doubt. The smoke curled up in volumes from the chimneys, and the boat came grandly on; it was a large steamer, and seemed to be heavily laden. Miss Gordon stood by me.

"You have my sympathies, Miss Stanhope," she said sweetly. "In times like these, when those we most love are in the fore front of danger, the one thing women can do is to feel one for another."

The boat came grandly on, loaded to the guards with cotton, the Union flag flying from her bow and stern.

"My aunt commissioned me," she added, looking wistfully at the boat, "to say to you that if, during your brother's convalescence, you think a change—country air—will help him, the hospitalities of Red Leaf are at his service. Bring him here."

"Your aunt is very good; return her my best thanks," I said. But as I looked into Miss Gordon's face, so proud and calm, *I* knew the benevolence she made a show of toward my brother was a miserable pretence. *I* knew in her heart she hated him, because he was loyal to the Union.

The boat was coming grandly on. In a few

minutes *I* would be speeding on to the one man that filled both our thoughts, and *she* would be afar from him.

What devil was it prompted me to speak to her then?—to tell her what hitherto I had so carefully concealed? It was with the sudden idea that if she *knew I* was going to him, and *she* was obliged to remain behind, it would add to my triumph and her discomfiture, that made me speak. I looked steadily on her fair face and said—

"Miss Gordon, there was something else in the letter I received—something beside my brother's illness."

Her colour waned, a dreadful pallor crept over her fair face, yet she nerved herself to calmness, and said—

"Go on."

"My letter told me of the—of a prisoner wounded and sick—your aunt's son."

There was a moment of perfect silence. She seemed to be steeling herself to bear without

flinching. Her face was as white as a ghost's, yet she stood firmly. Then she said slowly, as if speaking with some difficulty—

"Had you any—further—information?—any—particulars?"

"None—only the facts I have stated."

"I am glad—you—have not—told his mother. The—the—anxiety would kill her."

She spoke as if her tongue were dry. Then she sat down on the trunk from which I had arisen and gazed out on the river with a white face and a still sort of air about her, as if in a dream. I could but marvel at her mastery of emotions, at her calm bearing. I was convinced that her whole being was ready to swoon.

The boat came grandly on. The signal, a white flag, waved and waved. Yet the steamer kept on.

A sudden dread gripped my heart. Would she refuse to stop and take me on board?

The negro man laid down his signal flag.

"What is the matter?" I asked. "Why will she not stop?"

"Dat ar boat got too big a load of cotton on; she not a-gwine roun'-to for passengers," answered the negro.

Disappointment and anxiety wrung tears from my eyes. The boat passed on.

Then Miss Gordon rose to her feet, her face still white, but a strange look of high resolve in it.

"Miss Stanhope," she said, "we may as well return to the house. I trust you will soon get a boat. Steve will keep watch and let you know. Meanwhile you have time to lunch."

We slowly walked toward the house—she, stately, fair, calm, as though all the world were at peace, and there was no cause for more anxiety than a delayed luncheon might give.

Lunch! when *he* lay wounded and sick in a prison hospital! What manner of woman was this? After all, was she worthy of him?—this cold icicle—this proud pinnacle of snow! *She* could talk of luncheon when *my* heart was tortured with desire to rush to his side, to fend off Death, that was waiting to snatch him.

As we entered the hall door the luncheon bell was ringing.

"Excuse me a moment," said Miss Gordon, sweeping past me up to her chamber; "do not wait for me."

I did not wait; I went on to the breakfast-room. Mrs. Devaseur and Miss Clara Devaseur were already at the table. The meal was a sad and silent one, as was usually the case since the beginning of the war. Miss Gordon sent her excuses. She was tired and would lunch in her chamber.

None of us remained long at the table. As for me, I forced what I ate.

As I was going up to my room, a servant brought me a request from Miss Gordon to come to her chamber.

I surmised at once that she wished to send messages by me, perhaps letters. She was sitting at the window looking out on the river. The pallor, the dead whiteness, the fainting look had entirely disappeared. In their place a calm

peacefulness. Again I wondered what manner of woman was this!

I compared *her* love with *mine*. Had I been in her place I would have gone to him though a thousand cannon lay between, though legions of enemies held him in.

And *she*, his betrothed, knew of his danger, his distress, and calmly sat there looking out on the broad old Mississippi. I began to scorn this woman more than I hated her.

She turned and looked at me placidly.

"Miss Stanhope," she said, "with your permission I will send with you one of our servant women—an excellent nurse. She will not only assist you to take care of your brother, but give some attention to my cousin, her young master. I think you will find her a useful servant."

I expressed my willingness to take the nurse with me, and added my thanks, with some difficulty concealing my scorn.

A betrothed woman sending her slave to nurse

her dying lover! Could anything be more contemptible?

In the course of the afternoon Steve again sent for me—another boat was discerned in the distance. The nurse-woman joined me on the river bank. She had a carpet bag in her hand and a high turban on her head. Miss Clara Devaseur was with her.

"Miss Stanhope," said that young lady, "this is the woman-nurse. You will find her quite useful in a sick room; she is a good hand to sit up at night and give medicine. If you wish to talk to her, you must either speak very loudly or put your mouth to her ear; she has not the best hearing in the world, and has suffered somewhat in her eyes of late. You see she is forced to wear green glasses; the light is very offensive to her eyes."

I had never heard Miss Clara Devaseur make so long a speech. I looked at her in surprise, and saw that she was strangely agitated. I wondered if Miss Gordon had told her of her cousin's illness.

"The name of the negro nurse," added Miss Devaseur, evidently under some strong emotion, "is—Gilly."

By this time the boat had come to the land, and was running out a plank. I hastily bade Miss Devaseur good-bye, and descended the steps leading down to the river's edge. I was followed by the woman, and Steve with my trunk.

CHAPTER V.

THE SLAVE NURSE.

STEVE dropped the trunk down into the bow of the boat, and returned to the land. The plank was pulled in, the boat backed out from the shore, and steamed on down the river.

I stood on the guard and watched the scene fading into the dusk of twilight. The slender form of Miss Devaseur, standing stone-still, just as I parted from her, was the last object visible. It was not till the stars were out that I left the guard, and entered the ladies' cabin, or saloon, as some called it. The lamps were lighted, ladies were sitting on divans or chairs, reading or chatting. The folding doors leading into the long dining-saloon, or gentlemen's cabin, were

open, and several men, mostly in military dress, were walking up and down. All were strangers to me; yet I felt a tie between us—a strong tie. These were Union men and women, were loyal to the old flag. The invisible barrier that always existed between me and Southern men and women did not exist here. I breathed freely.

Gilly betook herself to some obscure spot. She was a poor slave, and did not dare sit in the same room with white people. Going in search of her, I found her on the guard, gazing out on the dark water. Putting my mouth close to her ear, I asked would she like to stay in the cabin?

Replying in the negative, she inquired if she could do anything to serve me?

I thanked her, "No," and left her alone on the guards. There was something about this negress unlike the ordinary African. It was evident from her complexion that some white blood ran in her veins; or, was it Indian?

She was of a p[illegible]lour, but the tufts

of grayish wool that stuck from under her gay cotton turban were as kinky as a full-blood negress. From her ears, which were more than half concealed by the African head-gear she wore, depended huge rings made of bright, red beads. Close around her tawny throat were tied half-a-dozen strings of different coloured beads—red, white, black, blue, yellow, and green. Her turban was made of one of those checked cotton handkerchiefs, gaudy with bright colours, red, green, and yellow reigning largely. A second handkerchief, equally as gay, was pinned in a half-square across her breast. Her dress was made of coarse blue and white striped cotton stuff, much worn by plantation slaves. House-women were given prints. Her hands were more than half-covered by home-knit woollen gloves.

I was in doubt whether the silence she maintained, so unusual with persons of her colour, was caused by dissatisfaction at her servile condition, or the physical infirmities with which she seemed afflicted.

I took up my position at the head of the ladies' cabin, on a sofa commanding a view of the whole length of the boat from stern to bow. This length was divided into two compartments, or long halls; the one nearest the bow of the boat was called the gentlemen's saloon; the one in which I sat was the ladies'. Folding doors separated these saloons, but they were never closed until the ladies were ready to retire to their berths for the night.

The gentlemen's saloon was used as the dining hall. A long narrow table, running the whole length, stood in the centre.

From my sofa, the scene was cheerful and bright. Had I been less preoccupied by plans and anxieties, it would have given me both amusement and pleasure.

The walls of both saloons were as brilliant as white paint and gilded cornices could make them. On both sides hung pictures, and mirrors which made pictures of what they reflected.

Men in soldierly uniforms, with swords at

their sides, lolled on sofas or walked and talked with fine ladies.

While over all, the men and the women, the pictures and the mirrors, fell the soft light from the pendant lamps—lamps clinking and clanking against each other as they swayed and swung to the movements of the boat, making a sort of musical clatter, in harmony with the hour and the place.

So sudden and unexpected was my transition from the scenes of Red Leaf to this busy boat, that I felt like one in a dream, and almost expected to awake and find myself in my own chamber, with the moss-hung trees, like so many widows in weeds, in view from my lattice window.

The negro waiters, in clean white aprons, went to and fro in the dining saloon, spreading the table for supper.

Two figures more than all the others attracted my attention, a man's and a woman's, walking side by side up and down the full length of the gentlemen's cabin.

The woman was splendid in black and gold. Her dress was either of fine woollen or silken fabric, I was not certain which, black in colour, and heavily braided in gold—skirt, corsage, and sleeves.

She was a tall, well-formed woman, full a head higher than her companion, who was neat, springy, and pompous on a small scale. The woman's hair was almost as golden as the braid on her dress, and worn in fluffy puffs and curls.

After the plain simplicity of the ladies at Red Leaf, this showy style of dress struck me as inappropriate and theatrical.

The supper bell rang, and the passengers crowded to the table. After I was seated, I detected myself looking up and down the table's length in search of the two I have just described, those two which more than all the others had arrested my eyes—perhaps because they had kept themselves more in my view; perhaps there was a more occult reason, which the reader will presently understand.

Supper over, I went to find Gilly, the nurse woman. She was on the guards, gazing out on the dark waters of the sullen old river.

She said she wanted no supper—her head ached —she was not hungry. I recommended tea as good for the headache. Then came the stewardess and bade her come to supper.

I could but suspect, as I saw the two walk off together, that pride was at the bottom of Gilly's loss of appetite and headache. Her dress was less fashionable, was more rural, than the garments worn by the steamboat negresses. These latter quite looked down on Gilly, and one I heard call her a "Country Jake."

"Yes, a regular cotton picker!" chimed in another.

"You may jes know," said a third, "dis is de bery fust time in all her borned days she ever get outen sight o' de cotton fiel'."

This was received as fine wit, and elicited a rude guffaw. One of their number nudged the speaker, and said it was a "shame to

make fun of a poor 'oman right afore her face."

"Law!" cried the stewardess, "*she* don't hear nary word; she's as deef as a post. I jes had to bellow to make her come to supper."

Gilly drank her tea in silence. The quiet of her countenance showed that not a word of their mocking had reached her ears. She went back to her seat on the guards, and again gazed out on the water.

Later in the evening, after most of the ladies had gone to their berths for the night, I observed the little dapper man and the splendid woman in black and gold, near the bow of the boat, sitting at a small table, a bottle and two glasses between them, and somehow in my mind arose the question—

"*Man and wife?*"

From some part of my consciousness came a negative answer. Still I watched them: the woman was the last to drink. She drained the bottle, then rose and went into a state-room near

where she was sitting. All the state-rooms in the ladies' cabin were *not* occupied. How did it happen that this gilded and golden woman had a berth in the gentlemen's cabin?

As I mentally asked myself this question, the little pompous man also rose from the table, looked up and down the saloon—by this time I was the only lady in either cabin—then, with somewhat an air of stealth, he entered the same state-room in which the woman had gone.

I said to myself, "*Wrong!* they *are* man and wife."

Yet even at the moment something like a sensation of shame flashed over me. Ah! had I known—had I known! the flash would have been a flame, and scorched me.

Soon thereafter I sought my own state-room. I was to occupy the lower berth, Gilly the upper. I expected to find her fast asleep, but she still sat drearily looking out on the night and the broad old river.

I asked, "Why she had not gone to bed?"

"When I done wait on missus, den I go to bed," she answered simply.

I tried to make her understand *I* was no slave mistress to be waited on, and never expected her to sit up for me.

She climbed up to her berth, and lay down in her clothes, and her turban, and her many beads, and I heard no more from her till we reached the Crescent City.

CHAPTER VI.

IN NEW ORLEANS.

A MOTLEY crowd was on the wharf. People of all colours, and ages, and many tongues, and both sexes, soldiers, peddlers, and hackmen. One of these latter seized the carpet sack in Gilly's hand, thrust her into a carriage, pushed me in after her, and called out vociferously, "Step this way, gentlemen! Here's your carriage!"

I heard a voice say, "Come, Cora, we'll take this," and the neat little officer, whom I had observed as the companion of the splendid woman in gold and black, came up to our carriage and put a shawl and satchel in it. Then he turned to a woman—the same I had seen on the boat dressed in the gold braided garment—took her

by the arm—she was looking another way—and pulled her up to the door.

She stood, they both stood, the small man and the tall woman, right in front of us—the same golden hair and braided skirts.

She looked straight into my eyes, and I saw creeping over her face, *under* the two daubs of rouge on her cheeks, a deadly pallor.

A cry of horror burst from my lips. The woman was my sister Emily.

She broke away, she wrenched her arm from the man's and fled—fled as if pursued by the furies. The astonished young man snatched up shawl and satchel and ran after her. I also followed.

Emily looked back and saw that I was endeavouring to catch her. She plunged in the motley crowd, wiring in and out among the blacks and whites, soldiers and civilians, men and women and children. The young man with the shawl and satchel was just behind her. I barely kept in sight of her flying gold-braided skirt. One

moment I was almost able to lay my hands on it, the next it was dozens of yards distant, and dozens of chattering people stood between it and me.

Then I caught a glimpse of it as it was disappearing through the door of a carriage. I flew towards it with increased momentum. I saw the young man rush in after her, and the driver close the door and raise his whip.

I sprang almost directly in front of the horses, with such haste that I fell forward on the ground. My feet had stumbled, but I lifted my head and sent forth an entreating cry—

"Oh! Emily!"

I saw her face through the carriage window, and through the window came her answer to my cry: it was a shriek—it was a command—

"Drive on!"

I lay almost under the horses' feet. The driver jerked them round, and lashed them out of sight.

And this was my sister, this painted and bedecked woman—this a descendant from a good

Puritan stock—this one of Lebanon Long's brightest Sunday School scholars, the daughter of a preacher, the child of a Christian Church.

People helped me up, and thought the fall had stunned and confused me. It was not *my* fall, but *hers*—*hers* that overwhelmed me.

A fear that I might swoon there in that strange place, among those strange people, made me nerve myself to stand up and walk, though I felt like sinking to the ground and lying there for ever.

I made my way back to the carriage in which the nurse woman patiently sat, seemingly unaware that anything unusual had happened. I crept in and sat by her side, sick, sick at heart. She made no comment, nor asked a question. If she observed any change in my appearance she made no sign. After waiting for my trunk, we went up into the city—she silent and composed, I silent and tortured by contending thoughts. Was religion, was civilisation a failure? Were such as *she* the product of schools and churches?

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOSPITAL.

We drove straight to the hospital, where I expected to find Julius. It was a large building which, before the city fell into Federal hands, had been a warehouse for groceries. Its owner being a rebel in the rebel army, his property was seized by the Union officers and used as needed.

In the front part, a small place was partitioned off and served as a surgeon's office. The other portion had rows of couches on either side, occupied by the sick and wounded soldiers. I asked the negro servant for Private Stanhope, was told he was out, and invited to wait in the surgeon's office until he returned.

I was not sorry for this delay. I wanted time to regain composure before seeing Julius. I had,

indeed, received a severe shock. Seating myself in the one solitary chair the office contained, I gave myself up to the saddest thoughts. Gilly modestly placed herself near the door, her carpet sack serving as a stool.

It was nearly noon before Julius returned. Meanwhile Gilly, after the fashion of her race, had made acquaintance with the polite coloured man in waiting, and had long since left me to the solitude of the office.

Julius was not surprised to see me: indeed, he declared he had wondered why I had not sooner come—"*there were many chances of picking up money in a conquered city.*"

I briefly gave my reasons for coming. Mrs. Devaseur was immensely rich—it would pay me —pay *us*—to serve her son.

Julius accepted this as right and reasonable, saying, with an oath (he had learned to swear since leaving home)—

"You have not come any too soon. Two days ago I thought he'd kicked the bucket."

"How is he now?" I asked.

"Well, there's more chance for him now. Come and see for yourself."

He led the way down the lane made by the beds to the rear of the house, then up a steep dark stairway to the second storey, then between two more rows of beds to the front of the building, which was lighted by three large windows.

On the very last bed nearest the window lay the Master, asleep. Changed as he was, though so wasted and white, he was still beautiful with a high and rare beauty. As we neared his couch there rose from his side a woman.

"Why, who is this?" asked Julius in surprise. It was the Red Leaf slave, Gilly.

How had she so soon found her master?

I explained to Julius how I happened to bring her. While we were talking, Gilly stood at the window gazing down on a squad of Union soldiers marching by, followed by a troop of negro and white urchins.

The Master moved and moaned, opened his

eyes, and looked around with an eager intensity.

"Gertrude! Gertrude!" he called.

"Ah!" said Julius, "that is the name he has often murmured in his fevered sleep."

And I felt a secret joy that *she* was not by to answer to his call—that in her pride and self-indulgence she had sent her slave to do service by his sick bed.

And well did the slave do it. At the first sound of her master's voice, the first motion of his head or hand, she sprung to his side. She smoothed his pillow, put a cup to his parched lips, laid her yellow hand on his white brow, and said, with an air of authority and firmness,

"Master! have you forgotten? I am Gilly—Gilly, your servant, come to nurse you. Miss Gertrude sent me to nurse you."

"Ah!" said the sick man, "yes, I remember now. Let me hold your hand, Gilly; sit by me. It is like home to see you, Gilly."

A faint smile flickered on his lips, his eyes

closed, and he went off into that strange world only found in fevered dreams, his white thin fingers clasped in the yellow hands of the slave.

"That woman will save you all the trouble of nursing," said Julius, as we walked away. "She understands her business."

I secured lodgings near the hospital, a room for myself, another for Gilly.

After I was settled in my room, I related to Julius the scene with Emily. It was agreed between us that we should use every effort to find her.

Towards dark I went back to the hospital.

When I proposed to relieve the nurse woman, whom I again found sitting by her master's bed, she said, with great simplicity,

"Missus, dis aint no place for no lady sich as *you*—you go and rests yourself. Gilly can tak' care o' Mas Lynn. Mas Lynn is usent to my ways."

"But how about sleeping, Gilly? You must have rest, and there is no place here for you to rest on even a moment."

"Neber min' 'bout Gilly, niggers kin sleep any sort o' fashion—leanin' 'gin a post, nodden in a cheer—neber you min'."

The Master was awake, and heard this speech from his faithful slave. Something like a smile parted his lips as he looked from Gilly to me; then stretching forth his hand he held mine a moment.

"Gilly is right," he said, "this is no place for a—a lady."

Julius drew me to the window.

"If we could only get him out of this place," he said, "his recovery would be assured. Did his friends furnish you money for his benefit?"

"No, they did not."

"That is strange, considering they are rich. With money enough we might even get him out of this noisy place. Perhaps if you were to write to his mother ——"

"No, I cannot write to his mother. She is an invalid; and to tell her of her son's imprisonment and illness would kill her. I made her

think *my* brother was sick, not her son, and that I came to nurse *you*. I have some money; I will spend it for what he needs."

"Is there no one you can write to for supplies?"

"I will write to his cousin, a young lady who knows of his illness; meanwhile I have enough for the present."

Gilly was standing near as we talked, but on turning to give instructions for the night she was gone. Julius and I remained with the master until she returned, which she soon did, bearing in her arms a huge bundle. The bundle was two new blankets which she had purchased "wid money Miss Gerty had gin her."

"You see, Missus," said she, with an air of satisfaction, "when I gets sleepy I ken jes querl up in dese blankets and sleep like a top; Mas Lynn, he don't need me all de time."

I wrote that night to Miss Gordon, informing her of her cousin's condition in the hospital—overcrowded by rude soldiers, sick and wounded—and stating to her that a free use of money

would not only secure him delicacies the hospital did not afford, but might possibly procure his removal to a pleasanter lodging.

Before I had time to receive an answer to this, a letter came to me from Miss Gordon, dated the day I had left Red Leaf. It was enclosed in a letter from a mercantile house in this city, "Wilkins & Hart," dealers in groceries and produce. She said:—

"DEAR MISS STANHOPE,—I can never sufficiently thank you for your kind consideration in not informing my aunt of her son's unhappy situation. In her present state of health, the increased anxiety she would feel, might prove fatal. You left so soon after I learned of my cousin's condition, I had not time to collect my thoughts and consult with you as to what would be the best course to pursue with regard to his welfare. If there is anything I can do, do not hesitate to call on me. My aunt and her son have so much confidence in your ability, kindness, and energy, I can but feel myself justified in leaving everything to your judgment. You will find Gilly useful, and a number one nurse. Should you think it possible or advisable to remove my cousin to some quiet place, more conducive to comfort and convalescence, his mother's gratitude will indeed be great. The

commission house of 'Wilkins & Hart' will advance any money needed. They have instructions to that effect. Should you wish to communicate with me, send your letters to 'Wilkins & Hart,' as, by the time this reaches you, I will have left Red Leaf for an indefinite time, and will perhaps be in the Federal lines.—Gratefully yours, GERTRUDE GORDON."

This letter perplexed, yet pleased me. That she had abandoned Red Leaf I was greatly pleased. But whither had she gone? and why? were questions that much perplexed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEARCH FOR EMILY.

It was settled between us, Julius and myself, that we were to make every effort to find our sister, and win her back to paths of decency. I felt the more free to devote my days to this work, as the faithful Gilly so well knew how to take care of her master.

How to begin our search was the difficulty. I dared not put an advertisement in the papers lest she should grow alarmed and flee the city. I could not enquire of the whereabouts of Emily Stanhope, for it was almost certain she was not known by her own name. Her companion on the boat had called her "Cora." I could not describe her hair or complexion. She had dyed

the one, and painted the other. She might change the colour of the dye for her hair, and the paint for her skin, making herself one day a blonde, the next a brunette.

The first thing we did was to go to the wharf where still lay the boat, *Reindeer,* on which I had seen her.

We found the clerk a polite enough young man, but he had paid no attention to the passengers. He remembered the lady with the black and gold braided dress, but did not know her name. He "could not say whether she was married or not," was his answer to Julius's question. Julius clung to the hope that Emily was married to some man, well or illy; he little cared so she *was* married.

I was able to point out the state room she and the young man had entered. The clerk referred to his books and found that the room had been engaged by a young man for himself and lady. He had supposed the man's wife.

Julius felt elated.

"I think you are uneasy for nothing, Hester," he said, "I guess Emily's all right."

"If she is all right, why dread to see me? No! It is all wrong, and I must find her ere she goes quite to ruin."

The young man who engaged the state-room registered his name as "G. W. Smith." I at once suspected "G. W. Smith" was a fraud.

The steamer *Reindeer* was held by the Union officers to make excursions along the river coast to capture rebel cotton. G. W. Smith had gone on the excursion for a frolic. This was all we learned.

While fully convinced that Emily was leading a disreputable life, I refused to believe she had gone down to the low haunts of shame.

I could think of nothing better than to make the rounds of the boarding-houses, describing Emily's appearance to the mistresses of said houses, and asking aid and assistance in my search. This I could do without betraying her real position. I made up a story of separation,

of marriage, and change of name, not hard to credit—war makes many romances.

I went from house to house—to every place I thought likely to lodge strangers. I called for the mistresses of these houses, described my sister as well as I could, and asked if such a woman was among the boarders. The strange manners of these Southern women never failed to affect me painfully. The curious, cold stare these women would fix upon me, the unsatisfactory answers they gave, the utter absence of sympathy, or even of ordinary politeness, were matters of astonishment and wonder.

It was not till weeks and weeks had been wasted in fruitless visits to boarding-houses that I discovered the cause of the ill-treatment I received from these Southern women.

That discovery happened as follows:—One day, while on the street, walking before me was a woman, whose general contour I fancied resembled Emily's. A tress of that same bright-hued hair hung down her back. She was closely

veiled, as, indeed, was the custom of New Orleans ladies since it had fallen under Federal rule—a custom which no little nettled and irritated Union officers, who fancied it to be adopted from dislike or disdain of the Union army.

I followed the woman. I also was veiled, partly in imitation of the prevailing custom, partly to prevent a recognition should my sister see me. With some pains I attempted so to fashion my dress as to hide the plain Puritan, so predominant in my physical being. I fancy I had so far succeeded in this effort at change as not to be violently Yankee in appearance. The woman I followed turned more than once and looked at me, as if she suspected I was watching her. At length she stopped at a house and went in. I passed on a short distance, turned back, rung the bell, and asked for the lady of the house.

She came, looking pale and scared; a thin care-worn woman, with a sharp nose, and dressed in the limpest of muslins.

"Madame, do you keep boarders?" I asked as politely as possible.

Either the question or my appearance seemed to arouse her ire. She eyed me from head to foot, while over her sallow face crept the same look of cold distrust, of utter aversion, I had seen in so many southern women's faces.

"What do you want to know for?" she asked rudely.

I explained my errand, my search for a sister from whom I was separated by the accidents of war, and my conjecture that the veiled lady I had seen a moment ago enter the house might be the lost one I looked for. I ended by asking if I could see that lady.

The woman broke out in anger:—

"See her!—of course you can, if you are bent on seeing her! Who can hinder? You've got the power, and you've got the meanness! Do your worst, and make haste about it! Come and do it!"

She dashed the door wide open, swept into the

sitting room, flung open the closet drawers, opened desks, saying excitedly—

"Come!—see everything! Help yourself! Take what you want! You've got the power, and you've got the meanness."

Amazed and confounded, I told her I only wanted to find my lost sister.

"Lost fiddlesticks!" she screamed in scornful mockery. "Do you take us for fools? We mayn't be as smart as you nutmeg Yanks, but we aint quite fools. We've got a little grain of sense in our heads if we are poor secesh; and when you come a spying, and a nosing around after silver spoons and sich, and tell your trumpery tales about lost sisters, you may jest set it down you don't fool nobody—not much you don't—we've found you out long ago."

"Found out what?" I asked in deep bewilderment.

"Found out that you're one of old beast Butler's she-Yankee spies. *That's* what we've found out."

I told her that she was mistaken; that I was no spy; that I never saw Gen. Butler in my life.

She was scornfully incredulous. Her thin nostrils dilated, her dark eyes darted venom, she snorted like an angry horse.

"You needn't take the trouble to deny—your face tells on you. If you aint a Yank I never saw one in all my born days. Why, the Yank is spread all over you—*thick*."

Then she flung herself into a chair, and burst out crying. Swaying herself back and forth she sobbed out—

"Oh Lord! Oh Lord! What have we come to! What have we come to!"

At this juncture the woman with the golden tress of hair, whom I had seen enter the house, came into the room. She was an utter stranger to me. Going up to the sobbing woman, she put her arms about her—

"Oh mother," she said tenderly, "do not fret; if they choose to take me, I can bear it. I ——

I ——" Then suddenly turning to me—"What is it, Madam?" she asked with icy dignity.

This young woman also, as the elder had done, as all that I had seen in this wretched city had done, looked at me with aversion and suspicion. How could I change this? What could I do? How prevent the power of subtly ingrained prejudices rising against me? I stood silent, not knowing what to say.

The elder woman, whom the younger called mother, regained composure under the ministrations of her daughter. Drawing a deep sigh, blowing her nose and wiping her eyes, she said, mournfully and despairingly,

"It's all over, Janie, I've spoken my mind right out. I told her exactly what I thought of a—she-Yankee woman mean enough to creep into people's houses and spy out spoons for old Beast Butler"——

"Oh, mother!" ejaculated her daughter in a tone of alarm.

"Yes, I did! and I don't care!" went on the

mother, doggedly. "He may do his worst: he'll do it anyhow, when the nótion takes him."

"I can't see why you persist in calling me a spy," I said.

"Aint you a Yankee?" asked the elder woman.

"Oh, mother! *please* don't say anything," pleaded the younger; "*please* keep quiet."

"If you mean by Yankee a native of Massachusetts," I answered, "you are right—I am a Yankee."

"I knew it the moment I laid my eyes on you!" she burst out, triumphantly; "you can't fool me! I know Yankees if I only see the tips of their blue noses."

"Oh, mother! mother!" cried the daughter in great alarm, "you'll get us all in prison. Oh! please (turning to me) *don't* mind what mother says, she does not mean to offend—she's nervous and worried—*please* don't report on us!"

"Report to whom?" I asked, still astonished.

"To Beast Butler. Oh! you don't know how

he hates us all!—he calls us 'she adders' and 'she devils.' He sent to jail one of mother's friends yesterday—a good woman, and"——

"For nothing on earth," broke in the mother, "but because she said he was a cross-eyed ugly old beast, as he is! There, now, send *me* to jail too!"

And she went off into another fit of hysterical sobbing.

I was thoroughly aroused. I told them it would do them good to go to jail and stay awhile: it would teach them some sense, which they evidently had not.

I started off, leaving the elder woman sobbing and crying, the younger standing in the doorway begging me with the most hypocritical humility not to report on her mother—talking fair and smooth to my face when I well knew her heart was full of hatred, not only toward me, but toward all good and loyal people.

This, then, was the elucidation of the scorn and dislike I had so often seen in Southern

faces. I was a Northern woman, and was hated because of my nativity.

The more I reflected on the conduct of these women, the more I resented it. Considering that *I* belonged to the strong conquering section, and *they* to the weak conquered South, I could but think a little humility would have been more becoming.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DOCTOR'S STRATEGY.

I RETURNED to my own room, weary, dispirited, and angry. Emily seemed lost to us for ever. The hatred and distrust of these rabid New Orleans women presented obstacles in my way I knew not how to overcome. Instead of aiding *me* to find, they would have aided *her* to elude me.

Meanwhile the Master of Red Leaf slowly, but almost imperceptibly, crept toward convalescence. The constant fever, which was of a lingering, nervous type, prevented the healing of his wound.

We feared, in spite of our care, he would slip away into the realms of eternal night.

Mr. Wilkins, of the firm of Wilkins & Hart, had sent his own family physician, a practitioner

of long experience, to visit the Master,—"Not," as he stated in a polite note, addressed to Julius, "that in the least degree he distrusted the learning or ability of the eminent surgeon having charge of the hospital; but his friend, Dr. Bell, had expressed a desire to be permitted to observe the methods of practice, and to compare notes with the army surgeon," &c., &c.

This Southern doctor was a middle-aged man, of a cheerful, careless look, which was the more remarkable as he was the first person I had seen in the city who preserved even a comparatively cheerful face. I secretly suspected he was either a Union man at heart, or Northern by birth. Quite a friendship sprung up between the Southern and Northern M.D.'s. They dined and drove together, and discoursed together on the diseases peculiar to Northern and Southern climates. Dr. Bell's brother was a wine merchant, and imported the best wines from the vinelands of the old world. More than one basket of champagne, and more than one dozen of fine old

port, found their way from the brother's cellar to the surgeons' rooms, sent by the Southern doctor.

Thus it happened, when Dr. Bell privately assured Julius that if he wanted to save the Master's life he must remove him from the hospital to a more quiet place, and Julius intimated to the surgeon it would pay *him* (Julius) to give the Master a few extra comforts, as his friends were very rich, the surgeon was in so amiable a frame of mind he told Julius he might "Go to h——l with the d——d rebel! He was bound to die; it made no odds whether he died in one house or another."

Taking this for consent, one dark night the Master was borne from the hospital on a cot, and put in a room in the same house that lodged Gilly and myself.

From this time the improvement in his condition became more evident.

Although wasted to a shadow, the clearness of his mind and memory remained unimpaired. I

often feared it was this clearness that prevented his more rapid recovery. *He could not forget.* The cruel condition of his country was never absent from his thoughts.

But for Gilly's tender and watchful care, he certainly would have sunk under the threefold ordeal of a severe gun-shot wound, a lingering malarial fever, and the torturing thoughts that never left his mind.

As for my feelings toward him, they had subsided into the same calm content that had lulled and soothed me when so often his companion during the sickness of his slaves. Jealousy and envy were fled from my breast, or asleep in some deep recess of my soul. There were none now to stand between me and the object of my adoration. In his helpless weakness, I felt something as a mother feels towards her helpless infant. *I* had sole charge of him, *I* had access to his person day and night, *I* prescribed his food and consulted his physician, *my* hands smoothed his pillow and bathed his brow; while *she* was afar

out of sight, out of hearing, and, as I sometimes dared to hope, out of mind.

If she was in his mind, why did he never speak of her? Why never ask about her? I had not heard him call her name since the first hour of my arrival.

A profound satisfaction filled me.

One day, when I entered his room, after a weary walk of miles and miles in search of Emily, I was pleasantly struck with the improved appearance of the Master. The expression in his large, thoughtful eyes was more placid—was less as if on his one mind rested the weight of the whole rebellious South.

The ever-faithful Gilly, still wearing the gay cotton turban and the glass beads so much affected by people of her race, vacated the seat by his couch, and gave it to me, as she always did when I entered the Master's room.

I bade her go for a walk in the fresh air, while I remained. A pleased light was in her

Master's eyes as he watched her retreating form. She, indeed, merited his most grateful feelings.

"If I ever regain strength and life," he said, with something of his old grave smile, "I will owe the blessing to your coming—yours and the faithful Gilly's."

A thrill went through my heart, as I remembered that she—*she*, once, if not now, his betrothed—had chosen to remain in the ease and luxury of home, and had sent her servant woman—her slave—to nurse him.

The Master stretched out his hand for mine, and continued, in his grave way—

"And your brother's kindness has been more than I could look for. How can I ever repay it? He thinks it possible I may revisit my mother. Poor mother," he added, after a pause, and while tears sprang to his eyes, "it would give her some pleasure to see her son once more."

I waited breathlessly. Would he refer to *her* by word or look?

I told him my brother and I hoped to take

him to Red Leaf as soon as he was strong enough to bear the journey. He said the very hope gave him strength.

I mentioned that I had a letter from Miss Clara Devaseur of a recent date.

"And my mother, how does she bear the times?" he asked.

"Much as when we were there; but she is very anxious about you. Your illness and capture by the Federals has been concealed from her."

"That is well," he quietly remarked. "It would only add to her anxiety."

Was he thinking of *her?* Would he ask news of *her?*

I watched his face. It retained its calm thoughtfulness. Was this indifference? was it forgetfulness? Had there been a break between them?

As a still further test, I said—

"Miss Devaseur writes that her cousin, Miss Gordon, has left Red Leaf. I am afraid Miss Devaseur will miss her sadly."

"I am afraid she will, poor girl."

He sighed with a gentle pity; but the pity was for the cousin he had loved as a cousin. Still no word for the cousin he had loved with a dearer, deeper love. What did it mean?

My letters from Red Leaf had given no information as to whither Miss Gordon had betaken herself. I knew that she had wealthy relations in Kentucky, and that the propriety of the whole family leaving Red Leaf and residing with or near those relations in a country less ravaged by war, had been frequently discussed. The Master had long favoured the plan; but his mother was not only unwilling to abandon her home, but more unwilling to leave the State as long as her son was a soldier in it.

I strongly suspected that Miss Gordon, foreseeing, as many did, the utter ruin of the South, the wreck of the Devaseur house,—its fall into the mud and mire of poverty, had gone to those Kentucky friends, comparatively free from the ravages of war.

To send a slave to nurse her lover; to abandon home and friends when misfortune lowered; to leave an invalid aunt who was as a mother to her, and a cousin who was as a sister—what would he think of such ignoble conduct?

How intensely I longed to have him know all this! Yet I durst not tell it myself. I durst not speak as I felt on this subject. It might arouse suspicion of my own secret feelings.

I knew he would soon learn it all. I was anxious to return to Red Leaf, that he might see her in her true light; that he might forget her forever.

It was not so easy a matter to get the Master out of the city. He was yet a prisoner of war. In permitting his removal from the hospital the surgeon had entrusted him to Julius.

"If he dies, well and good," the surgeon had said, "it will be one less rebel to fight; but if he lives, he must go to Johnson's Island."

The New Orleans doctor said a Northern prison would end the Master's life.

The army surgeon had ceased to visit the Master, but not to ask after him. He was not a particularly violent man, but he had a strong way of showing his loyalty.

"Has your sick reb. gone to h——l yet?" was his way of asking whether the Master was dead or alive. Sometimes he varied his form of words —"Has the devil come for your reb. yet?"

The New Orleans doctor, whose name was Bell, exhibited quite an admiration for this rough Union surgeon, and laughed at his red-hot loyalty. The surgeon returned the Southern's good will.

"Of all things," said the Southern doctor one day to the Northern, as they walked up the lane of couches, examining the cases of the sick and wounded—Julius was in the hospital, and related the conversation to me—"of all things I most want in my office, to give it a regular scientific appearance, and to impress the common herd with the idea that I am as familiar with the inner parts of humanity as with the outer—is—a—*skeleton.*"

"A skeleton!" laughed the loyal M.D. "What an idea!"

"There's nothing strange in it," said the Southern, with great seriousness. "A human skeleton hanging in a doctor's office is a very effective object. It strikes the imagination of the people, and—brings patients."

The Northern M.D. laughed aloud.

"You may laugh," went on the Southern, as gravely as if he were arguing some philosophical point; "but I am right. There are some doctors who owe the beginning of their fortune and fame to—*skeletons*. An office with a skull or two on the mantel or on the bookcase, and a few leg and arm bones, and a—*skeleton* hanging up in a corner, is my ideal of an office.—By the way, doctor, I've some splendid old wine in my closet; I shall send you a dozen bottles to-morrow."

After further talk of this sort, the Northern doctor generously offered the Southern the pick and choice of any bodies the hospital might furnish during the next week, to be turned

into an ornamental skeleton by that eccentric M.D.

After this Dr. Bell's visits to the hospital were of frequent occurrence. He seemed to be very nice and particular in his ideas of skeletons, and inspected the bodies with great care.

At length the choice was made—a poor fellow died of a low lingering fever. The Southern doctor presented his order from the Northern to Julius, who had charge for the time of the hospital, and the emaciated body was carried out in the doctor's buggy, wrapped in a huge overcoat. The negro attendants were asleep, and saw nothing of the manœuvre. When the body was missed from its place next day, they were told that the friends of the deceased had taken it for private burial.

Southerners, whose fortunes during the war sometimes found them under the strict military rule of conquerors, will readlily see through Dr. Bell's little strategy. The emaciated body, already a skeleton, generously donated for the

purpose of adorning a doctor's office, never served that purpose.

For weeks past Julius and the Southern M.D. had prepared the mind of the hospital surgeon to receive the news of the death of the Master—always giving bad accounts of his condition.

So when Julius told the surgeon a coffin was wanted for that dead reb., the coffin was sent without the least suspicion. But the Master was thriving in an adjoining room, and Dr. Bell's skeleton lay in the Master's bed waiting a decent burial.

CHAPTER X.

MY INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL BUTLER.

THE accusation made against me by rebel women, of my being General Butler's spy, turned my thoughts in that direction. I resolved, before leaving New Orleans, to see the General. Perhaps he did have spies permeating the city; and if he did, who more able to aid in finding Emily?

I said nothing to Julius of my intention of soliciting his interest in Emily. Julius had resolved to think of his sister as of one dead and buried for ever.

The open object of my visit to the General was to get permits to leave the city. Julius said there was no difficulty about truly loyal persons getting permits. The Master was to pass as my cousin, a young man from New England, who

had been teaching in the South for some years, and had come into the city to welcome the Union soldiers, had been stricken down by a malarial fever, and whose removal to some quiet country place was advised by the physician to complete his recovery.

With these ends in view, I found myself, at nine in the morning, at the Custom-house, which was then used as headquarters by General Butler.

A crowd of some two hundred persons were in waiting to see the General. The corridors, the ante-rooms, were thronged. More than two-thirds of these people were women—Southern women, as I judged from their appearance. Why should these Southern women seek an interview with a General they so hated—a General they never mentioned but to vituperate?

War had a visible effect on the faces of the women living in its midst. In every face I read the wretchedness of the land. In each and every breast lay a deep-seated and sleepless anxiety. The anxiety was more or less mingled with

other emotions—pride, humility, sorrow, anger, or hatred—more often pride and hatred than humility and sorrow, for the Southerners are a stiff-necked people; subjugation to them was a bitter and cruel—who can doubt, a deserved fate.

After waiting, patiently or impatiently, according to the nature of the individual, the crowd was agitated by the rumour that the General was coming.

I looked out, and saw a carriage drawn by two horses rapidly approaching. Two armed soldiers sat on the box. Two armed soldiers rode by its side. Six soldiers, armed with guns and bayonets, drew up in military order to receive the Commander of New Orleans when he arrived.

As the carriage dashed up, its panting horses, foam flecked and blowing wide their nostrils, were reined in so suddenly as to throw them upon their haunches. The mounted guards checked their steeds, and stood on either side of the carriage. The two soldiers on the box

sprang to the ground, opened the door, and the great man descended and stood in the sight of meaner mortals.

There was something in this scene that jarred on my sense of the right and proper—that shocked and alarmed my Republican principles. It was too much after the kingly fashion; it savoured too much of the Old World Imperialism. It filled me with anxiety for the future of our country, which for years would be in the hands of our victorious military men—men corrupted by habits of arbitrary rule, by the homage, the unquestioning obedience, of the common soldiers —soldiers as dependent and as silently submissive as slaves.

The war, as I understood it, was made on the South to further the progress of freedom, not to retard it. That officers in the Union army could so easily forget this high principle was enough to make patriots tremble for the people's rights.

Truth compels me to confess I was disappointed in the aspect and bearing of General Butler. Not

in the remotest degree did he resemble a hero. So intensely was he hated by the people of the South—so universally abused—I had fondly flattered myself that the strong qualities of his mind would force their respect, despite their proclivities to hate.

Under no circumstances could General Butler be called a handsome man. Even with his eyes shut, he was anything but handsome; while the severe strabismus which so distorted his vision gave to his countenance, when his eyes were open, something of the grotesque, and an appearance particularly unpleasant to beholders.

I shrank back, and observed his manners. Through the lane opened by the crowd to his own especial office, he walked with the conscious air of a conqueror among the conquered. Considering that the crowd of the conquered then present was made up of dilapidated women and grey-haired men, I could but think a less assuming air would have better become his position as a soldier of the army of freedom and equality.

The first thing he did on entering his office was to lay a pistol, taken from his pocket, on the table before his chair.

With a curious sort of smile, that brought to mind Goethe's Mephistopheles, with one eye he glanced at the crowd of waiting women, while the other seemed to be fixed at the strange legend printed in large letters on the wall, which ran thus—

"*There is no difference between a he and a she adder in their venom.*"

It was a study to observe the emotions this "simple fact in natural history," as Parton terms it, aroused in these rebel women.

They felt it was meant for them, and resented it in their hearts as insult added to injury. Some angrily reddened as they saw it, others grew white with a deeper hate, while some sorrowfully cast down their eyes, and the tears slid down their faded cheeks. But not a word was spoken. Fear can tame tigers; it did something toward taming the tongues, if it did

not subdue the hearts, of these fiery Southern women.

I could but fancy General Butler secretly enjoyed the pain and mortification caused by that small item from natural history.

It was the custom to receive thirty of these women at a time. That number ranged themselves in a row—a semi-circle—around the General's desk, made known their wants, received their answers, and filed out as fast as possible to make way for the next thirty.

The wants were many and various; civil law was set aside; there was no tribunal of power but the military. Every dispute, every wrong, every complaint was taken to Union officers for jurisdiction; the laws and customs of the State were ignored, and cases decided according to the wisdom or inclination of the soldier who played the part of judge.*

* In James Parton's "History of General Butler in New Orleans," we find these words:—"Major Bell's court was one of the lions of the town. During a considerable part of General Butler's stay, he administered all the justice that

I could well comprehend how, after great wars of conquest, military men, flushed with success, their pride inflated by the pleasing spectacle of a brave foe subdued and prostrate at their feet, would favour the establishment of strong centralised governments.

Accustomed, as military men are, to the blind obedience of large bodies of men, they are too apt to underrate the intellect of those they govern. It is always the case that rulers underrate the minds of those over whom they exercise absolute power.

Absolute monarchs under-rate the ability of their subjects and over-estimate their own.

The white masters in the South under-estimated the mentality of their slaves. All over the world—in every nation, among every people, savage or civilised—men, as a body, under-rate the intellectual capacity of women. Men falsely

was done in New Orleans, according to the forms of a court. He decided all cases, from petty larceny to high treason, from matrimonial squabbles to suits of divorce. He would dispose of fifteen cases in thirty minutes. An hour was a long trial."

estimate the relative strength of the male and female mind as absolute monarchs falsely estimate the difference between the mentality of princes born to rule and the people born to obey.

Military rule is the most despotic on earth: a common soldier has no right of thought or action; he is a machine moved by his superior.

In the large, the true sense of the word, a military people cannot at the same time be a free people.

Freedom, the grandest word, the grandest thought possessed by humanity, though often on the lips of the ancient Greeks and Romans, in its finer and diviner sense, was a stranger in those so-called Republics, as she is to-day a stranger in lands that daily shout her name.

Never, never, will a people be truly free whose favourite god is Mars, whose loudest plaudits and highest offices are given to military heroes. There can be no true freedom where the rich rule the poor, the strong overbear the weak, where men are masters and women subjects or slaves.

General Butler began at one end of the row with the question,

"What do you want?"

The want was stated, and the answer came short, quick, and stern—with few exceptions, a denial. There was no appeal. The applicants accepted the fiat, and filed out of the circle; two orderlies at the door, with guns and bayonets, let them out of the office.

The greater number of requests were for passes to leave the city. The invariable answer to these was,

"No passes are granted now."

This severity on the part of the General greatly discouraged me as to the hope of interesting him in my affairs. I had managed to get myself in the first batch, among the first that stood before him. To give myself time to consider what I had best say, I slipped down to the lowest end, which was nearest the General's chair. My heart beat with anxiety. Would he receive *me* as he did those disloyal women? Was it only to the

"she-devils" of the South he felt and showed so much implacable dislike? *

As one by one filed out, and my turn was near at hand, my heart quailed and almost fainted within me, lest on me also should fall the anger or contempt of the commander. Yet I durst not now retreat.

To go back seemed full as perilous as to go on. The circle was almost melted away. Only two stood before me.

At this juncture two men entered the office and softly stole to the General's side. They were both young, and one was eminently handsome, with a gentle, yet brave and noble look. I afterwards knew him as Lieutenant Reese.

The other, I learned, was Lieutenant Morton, of New York, a brave and honourable soldier.

* In a letter written by General Butler while he was in command of New Orleans, he calls the women of that city "she-devils." It was a term often, by newspaper correspondents, applied to the women of the South, whose sympathies were strong for the Southern Confederacy. Butler's letter is published in "Parton's History of Butler in New Orleans."

This latter stooped and spoke a few words in General Butler's ear. *I* heard every word.

"That poor woman," he said, in a tone of earnest pleading, "is here again. General, you *will* give her a pass? Her tale is true."

From the glance of his eye my attention was directed to the woman who stood last but myself in the row as the "poor woman" whose "tale was true."

The General made no answer to the young officer, but went sternly on answering and dismissing the applicants.

It was now the "poor woman's" turn.

She was pale and thin, with a look of such intense anxiety in her wide-open eyes as was painful to see. Her hands were clasped convulsively, she trembled like an aspen leaf in the wind. Her gaze was fixed on Butler's face as if *he* were her fate, and in his pitiless hands were all her heart held dear.

A subtle sense of something unusual in her case seemed unwillingly to affect General Butler.

There was a longer pause before he uttered the stern query, "What do you want?" and he did not look on her with either of his two eyes, which ever seemed to cross purposes with each other, as if—so violent was the animosity which existed between them—their impulses impelled them to look in opposite directions.

His one eye was bent on the table before him, his other seemed yet to keep watch and ward over those large printed letters on the wall, which gave so much offence to Rebel women.

If he waited for the woman to speak, he waited in vain. She looked at him and that was all. At length, in his harshest tone, yet not without a certain effect, came his formula,

"*What do you want?*"

The woman dropped on her knees. The two young officers were watching her with a deep distress visible in their faces."

"Oh!" gasped the woman, "you know what I want—my heart will break."

A deadly pallor overspread her face. I thought

she was about to faint. Her lips were dry and colourless. At this moment a hand presented a cup of water to her mouth. Putting it aside, she gave a great gulp, as if to swallow her emotions, rose to her feet, and stood before the arbiter of her fate.

"What do I want," she began, in a low voice, full of intense, but suppressed feeling—feeling too painful for tears. "I want my children—my children! They were hungry when I left them, four weeks ago; your—your—*Union* soldiers took our all (the word *Union* seemed to choke her, so bitter is the hate of Secession women towards the Union). I came into the city for food to keep them from starving—Oh, my God!—four weeks ago. They are almost babes—they may be dead—*dying!*" (the word "dying" became a shriek, but with a strong effort to command herself she went on in the same suppressed tone). "I never would have come within your lines had I known you would have kept me here—never, never—I would have died with

my children. *Let me go back to them,* they are so small. I cannot sleep; all night I hear their voices—I see their outstretched arms—*Oh let me go!* They are not far, only across the lake. Every day I start to them, *your* soldiers drive me back—your soldiers' bayonets hold me back. My darlings!—my darlings!"

A pause ensued, there was intense stillness, yet the General made no answer. Suddenly changing the passionate pleading of her tone to one of indignant remonstrance, she went on—

"Do you know what it is to hold a mother from her babes? You cannot know. You are men, and feel not; soldiers, and hear not; conquerors, and care not. Oh I tell you—*I*, a mother—were you to thrust your iron fingers in among the chords of a woman's heart and wrench it out, it would be no more cruel. I pray you humbly, let me go home to see my babes."

During all this time, General Butler's one eye had fixedly gazed on the wrung face before him; his other yet watched the letters on the wall.

There was a short pause before he replied, as if he half suspected she had more to say. She said no more. His answer came, stern as usual, but more deliberate—

"Permits are not given now."

The two young officers started as if a blow had been dealt them. Lieutenant Morton flushed; he turned quickly away, and left the room. Young Reese, with a sudden impulse, gripped the handle of his sword as if a foe were near.

The woman fell to the floor in a dead faint. Two orderlies bore her out.

I found myself alone with Butler. Without an instant's waiting, he turned to me—

"Now. *You?*"

I stepped to the front, and stood for a moment, hesitating how to begin. The scene I had just witnessed had somewhat shaken my composure. The General relieved my embarrassment by commencing himself—

"You are not of this ilk?"

"No, sir."

"New England?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah! I thought so. You look a genuine descendant from a Plymouth father. I'll wager your ancestors whipped witches and hanged Quakers. No; I've got it wrong,—*burned* witches and whipped Quakers. What can I do for you?"

This sudden jump from the stern to the jovial rather encouraged me. I briefly told the story of Emily. I concealed nothing; I told him I feared she was living basely, and implored him to procure information, if he could, of her whereabouts. He listened with attention, made a few notes, and bade me come again in three days.

Before leaving, he gave me all the permits I wanted.

My New England nativity lifted my loyalty above suspicion.

With thanks for his kindness, I left his presence. In the street, near the Custom-house door, was a crowd of people. In the centre of

the crowd were the two soldiers who had carried out the fainting woman. One of the men yet supported her; she was still insensible. The two young officers, Reese and Morton, stood near. Dr. Bell was applying some sort of a restorative. A third young man was busy giving orders, to which no one paid attention. At this last I stared with the deepest interest, for I recognised in him the smart young fellow who had been Emily's companion on the boat. The same small pomposity, the same consequential strut, the same self-satisfied air. I resolved to speak to this person, and learn what I could of Emily.

Meanwhile he assumed direction of the situation—showed much indignation that a *woman* should cause such a commotion at the Custom-house door, the General's headquarters. "Why had she fainted here? Why was she allowed to faint in so inappropriate a place? Why did not the men move on, and take her away at once?"

"We are waiting for the carriage, sir," respect-

fully answered the soldier who was supporting the woman.

"What carriage? Who wants a carriage? Do you suppose the Government furnishes carriages for all the women who choose to faint in this d——d city?"

"*I* ordered a carriage," replied the handsomest of the two young officers, looking straight into the face of the querulous captain. I saw from his uniform that the man I had observed with Emily was a captain.

"*I* ordered a carriage, and neither you nor the Government will be called on to pay for it."

From the expression in the eyes of the two men, as they met in that brief encounter of words, I judged there was no sympathy between them; on the contrary, a latent antagonism.

The younger man, who was inferior in rank, though so superior in manliness and beauty of bearing, was not the first to withdraw his eyes from the wordless war that ensued after the words were spoken—the war of sharp glances,

which pierced like poniards. His eyes were sternly fixed on the captain's until the latter's fell under their fire and he turned on his heel and went into the Custom-house.

The carriage came. The woman awoke from her long faint, and rent the air with the most fearful shrieks. She was a raving maniac.

"The threads of reason are snapped," said the doctor. "This will kill her, or—craze her for ever."

The orderlies put her into the carriage, and she was driven off to the hospital, her dreadful shrieks dying out in the distance.

"Would it have endangered the Union to have given this woman a pass to rejoin her children?" asked the doctor of the young officer.

"A Union," answered the officer gravely, "so easily endangered would hardly be worth preserving."

I went into the Custom-house to see the man who had known Emily. He was in the General's office. I waited at the door, not daring again to intrude into that august presence. I had not

long to wait. He came and stood in the doorway, lighting a cigar. I put myself plainly in front of him, and looked into his face. There is a certain class of men who never see a poorly or plainly dressed woman, unless she is so directly in his way that he is forced to ask her to get out, or to push her out. This young man belonged to that class. He did not seem to see me. I touched his arm, and asked the favour of a few words with him. He stared, and puffed away smoke.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"My business is of a private nature. Take me to some private place, or corner. Too many are passing here."

I spoke with an air of firmness and authority. *His* air of supercilious indifference roused me to indignation.

The young man so far descended from his high station as to conduct me to a room in which we were not liable to intrusion.

During this short space of time, I was making up my estimate of this man's character, and con-

cluded that a certain degree of self-assertion on my part would more command his respect than humility. Therefore I began with an air of command and authority—

"Will you be so obliging, sir, as to tell me your name?"

"Well!" he cried, after a long stare, which I bore with a severe gravity. "Well! this is d——d curious. What do you want with my name?"

"When I know your name, you shall know why I ask for it," I answered quietly.

"I'm not ashamed of my name, I don't keep it a secret."

"Then speak it."

"D——n it all! Why, I am John Martyr Pym, captain of Company B in the Union Army —that's what I am!"

"Six weeks ago I was a passenger on the steamboat *Reindeer*," I began, looking him steadily in the face. "*You* were on that boat in company with a lady."

"Well, whose business is that?" he interrupted, his face flushing.

"It is my business, sir. You called yourself Smith at that time."

"Your business?" and he stared at me much as he might have stared at a small fly, had such an insect made such an assertion.

"That lady was my sister. I wish to know where she is."

Captain Pym gave a long low whistle before he spoke.

"So *you* are the woman Cora ran from that morning?" he asked.

"I am that woman."

"Why, she told me you were a milliner, and she owed you a devil of a big bill, and wanted to dodge you."

"Where is Emily?"

"I don't know any Emily," he replied; "that girl called herself Corallie King."

"No matter what she called herself, she is my sister, and I must find her."

"D——d if *I* know where she is."

"You left the boat with her, you got into the carriage with her, you came up to the city with her—why can you not tell me where she is?"

"Because the very next day she raised a devil of a row, and I have not seen her since. She may be in Jericho by this time for what I know."

"Corallie King; is that the name she goes by?"

"That's the name of the girl I gave a trip on the *Reindeer*—and a devilish expensive trip it was. You don't know the money I spent on that girl, and she showed herself most d——d ungrateful—she did. The very next day I went to take her some concert tickets, and I wish I may die, if she did not turn on me like a tigress, and told me, if I valued my life, to keep out of her sight; that she had a monomania to murder such men as I was, and she was afraid, if I remained near her, some day she'd do it. After all I'd done for her, I tell you I didn't like it; not a d——d bit! I just told her, if she didn't stop such stuff and behave herself, I'd give her

in charge to the police; and I tell what, she just gave me such a d——d unpleasant look, as she coolly said the police would not always hold her, that I just thought I'd better wash my hands of her, and I've not laid eyes on her since."

"And you have no idea where I could find her?"

"Not the slightest. Why, I'd dodge that girl if I saw her coming down the street. I tell you, she's a wild cat! She's not broken in yet—she don't know how to behave herself to gentlemen."

Gentlemen! God save the mark!

Then this man, this *gentleman,* began to catechise me—"Where did I come from? How long had I been among these d——d secesh? What was I doing?"

In deference to the position he held as officer in the Union Army, I answered him politely.

"*Devaseur?*" he asked. "Is it not a very rich family?"

I answered, "Yes."

"How many niggers?"

"I do not know exactly—probably some two hundred or more."

"Raise cotton and sugar?"

"I think so."

"Any cotton hid out up there?"

"I do not know."

"Well, some of these fine days I'll pay you a visit and hunt up the cotton. Besides, I want to make the acquaintance of the ladies. I'm deuced fond of fine ladies. The captain of a steamboat's been telling me about these Red Leaf women, says the're the finest ever travelled on his boat, and he's had all sorts, having run the Mississippi as a boatman for twenty years. Look out, you'll see me some day."

With that he left.

And this was the creature to whom my sister had condescended! This contemptible, pert, small-sized popinjay! only half a man in mind or matter. Yet how strong was his confidence in himself! How undoubting his faith that he, Captain Martyr Pym, was a superior being!—

how superior to one entire half of humanity, the female half, he had not undertaken to decide, the difference was so vast.

But for the privileges granted by law to the male sex over the female, which privileges are held by the weakest as well as the strongest of men, how would contemptible creatures of the Pym sort rank with women? Not as now, their superiors and masters; this none can deny. By the right of his masculine sex, this *small* thing assumed the airs of mastery, not only over those unhappy women whose vices make them the footballs of fate, but over women as high above him as the stars are above the earth.

Calling to mind the ungoverned strength of Emily's nature, her grand physique, and the false attitude she and this little Pym, by the force of factitious circumstances, held toward each other —*he* the master, *she* the slave—a woman who sells her body to bidders is in a state of slavery worse than niggers ever lived in—I could well understand the terrible temptation that might

with 'R. R. D.,' General Delivery Post Office, she will hear of something to her advantage."

This so plainly pointed to Emily, a deep feeling of shame rushed over me. I could but suppose some man, having seen her on the boat, had inferred from her behaviour that she was open to any dishonourable proposal.

This also was Julius's idea.

"You see," he said, angrily, "how worthless she is. When a woman once begins to go down, she never stops. Thank heaven! it is the custom of such women when they cease to be decent, they cease to be themselves—they always drop their family names and take some fancy cognomen. I hope I shall never again know of Emily. She is dead to us, let her be buried and forgotten."

This from Julius, her brother and a man. Yet I, her sister, inwardly rebelled at his attitude. What if our sister had been stricken with some deadly, dangerous, and loathsome malady of the body? Would we have cast her out from

our care? Would we have abandoned her to the bleak winds, the snows, and storms fate might send on her naked and prostrate form? No; every fibre of the civilised being would revolt at so unfeeling a course.

Vice is a malady of the moral system, as fevers are of the physical. Is it consistent with the Christianity we profess to cast out far from our helpful care those who are morally diseased, while we so persistently use every effort to cure or palliate those that are physically? Even to the last moment of life, through long, loathsome, and incurable physical ills, we recognise it as our bounden duty to care for such unfortunates; never, while life lingers, to cease our efforts to restore to health, or to lessen pain. To the blind, the deaf, the lame, the cancerous, the palsied, we furnish medicines, food, and doctors, homes, kindness, and sympathy.

How different is the conduct of Christians towards the woman who falls into immoral diseases? With the first symptom of such dis-

ease, we set her adrift, we drive her out to the desolate haunts of wretchedness and sin. We not only abandon her to her own bad proclivities, but we forbid her return to the healthful ways of decency. If she strive to return, we drive her, we stone her back, with hard eyes and scornful looks. Father, mother, sister, and brother forget her as if she were dead, and deep buried out of sight. Christian preachers and teachers seem to believe Christ never died to save sinners of the female sex. Yet there is no reason in nature, or in the laws of the Great Creator, why a woman may not be mended of her moral diseases as well as a man.

On the third day I again went to General Butler's headquarters. As before, there was a great crowd of women waiting; as before, I saw coming rapidly down the street the General's carriage, with the armed out-riders and the two armed men on the box; and, as before, presently up dashed the foam-flecked horses, jerked almost on their haunches by the sudden reining up of

the driver; and, as before, the six soldiers with guns and bayonets were drawn up to salute him, and the two on the box sprang down to open the door for the great man, in his grand uniform of blue and gold, and all was quite after the Old World kingly fashions.

On the wall were yet the large printed letters which related that "simple fact in natural history" which so painfully affected the Southern women. As before, I saw some of the women flush with anger as they looked upon the legend, and some wept in silence, and some stiffened in pride, and, as before, fear tamed their anger and silenced their resentment. Women might frown and lower, but they durst not speak, Butler was their master; with one eye watching them, and one fixed on the obnoxious legend on the wall, Butler held them to respectful silence. Not a word did they utter. Verily it required the iron rule of Butler's military government to hold in subjection the Secession devil that lurked in the land.

It was indeed a difficult task for these women, brought up in the idea that they were privileged beings, privileged to say and do as they pleased, to realise that they were reduced to subjugation, and bound to obey their conquerors.

As before, these conquered women ranged themselves before their master, in rows of thirty, and humbly made known their wants, and, as before, came the General's stern responses.

When my turn came, the General nodded with a recognising glance. I showed him the *Delta's* personal, and asked if that was not a clue that could be used.

"Do you know who put that in the *Delta?*" he asked.

I told him I had not the slightest idea.

"And you think this personal may be made a clue?"

A painful flush reddened my cheeks; not because of anything the General said, but because of the way he looked. For as he spoke, with one eye fixed on me, there suddenly occurred the

most remarkable strabismic action of his visual orbs it had ever been my lot to witness. The chronic animosity so long existing between the General's two eyes suddenly, from some mysterious cause, seemed to suffer a sort of spasm of increased violence, which had the curious effect of still further widening their angle of vision and of fearfully augmenting their obliquity of aspect. The eye which usually fixed itself on the large letters on the wall, and so perversely refused to work in harmony with its fellow, all in a flash fired its glance up to the centre of the ceiling, and glared as if it saw there its worst enemy; while the other eye, which did the humbler duty of watching the women petitioners, suddenly, without an instant's warning, lowered itself with a grotesque leer at my feet.

With a hasty movement I covered them with my skirt. I was painfully conscious that my shoes were neither of the newest nor of the best. Reddened and embarrassed, I waited in silence.

"Ah, ha!" he chuckled. "We've a better clue than that! Much better."

And he put a letter in my hand. The writing was Emily's. I trembled so I could scarcely read it; but I did, every disgraceful line, and felt my face scorched with shame as I read. It was a reply to the *Delta's* personal, and invited her unknown correspondent to call at her room on the next day, giving the street and number.

"Now," said the General, in a jovial tone, "as the Commander of New Orleans has no time to visit young ladies, he commissions you to go in his place."

So he himself was the author of the personal! So simple, and so effectual, was the stratagem, I only wondered I had not thought of it myself.

CHAPTER XII.

MY INTERVIEW WITH EMILY.

I DID not sleep that night. I lay thinking how best to address my sister—what words would most move her heart to repentance—what arguments were most effective to win her back to honesty.

That morning I dressed after the style of Southern women as much as possible. Not that I admired that style, or those who wore it. I did not admire them or their dresses. But the steady stare of aversion these women never failed to fix upon me was not pleasant. I critically observed Southern ladies, in order to detect wherein lay the difference between their personal appearance and that of New England women. That there was a difference I was

forced to admit. The readiness with which I was known as a Yankee proved it. After close observation, I detected a difference in the tone of the voice, in the accent, in the walk, in the general character of dressing.

In the New England woman's dress, the governing idea seems to be—neatness. In the Southern woman, the predominant idea, or rather aim, seems to be—beauty. Not that these women attain the beauty—far from it. The average woman of the South is too uncultured to possess true taste in beauty. Aiming to attain the beautiful in dress, they only succeed in making for themselves a showy style of dress. I had only to change the quiet, Quaker-like colouring of my garments, and to add a few flounces and put on a few ribbons.

The accent and pronunciation gave me more trouble. Watch as carefully as I could, I often caught myself lapsing into old habits—laying undue stress on the *r*'s, as fath*er*, moth*er*, and pronouncing the *u* in words as if it were *oo;*

and, in some words, the letter *o* New Englanders are apt to pronounce as *u*—for instance, in the word bonnet, we will hear it called b*u*nnet, homely is called h*u*mly, &c. It is in small things like these the difference is detected.

I had no trouble in finding the street and number to which Emily had bidden her correspondent. Her lodging was over a large drug store, up two flights of stairs. The door was closed, as I stood before it with a beating heart, trembling with fear lest even now she would escape and hide from me for ever.

I knocked; there was a short interval, and no response. I knocked again; then Emily's well-known voice said, "Come in."

I turned the bolt, went in, closed the door, and stood in front of it. My veil covered my face; it was a thick, dark veil. She had no suspicion of my identity, so effectually was my nativity concealed by the fashion of my garments.

"Do you wish to see me?" asked Emily free from all embarrassment.

So strong was my agitation, I could not speak; I stood stone still.

"Whom are you seeking?" she again asked, in a tone of indifference.

The veil fell from my face; I stretched out my hands towards her.

"Oh Emily!" was the cry of my heart. I could speak not another word, so severely was I shocked at the change in my sister's face, form, dress, and surroundings—the change since we had parted five years ago. Then, she was a fresh, fair girl, without art or deception in mind or adornment,—then, she dressed with Quaker-like simplicity, wearing her own hair and her own complexion. How was it now? The freshness, the purity, the *honesty* of her life was gone, was defaced and dispelled—her surroundings told the tale.

She was fuller in form and taller in stature; she was bold and confident in her bearing, splendid in fashionable garments, luxurious in surroundings. Grand mirrors and fine pictures

adorned her chamber, and silken curtains, covered with lace, hung on her window. On a marble table were glasses and bottles, and a plate of tropical fruit. How had she gained all those luxuries—she, a poor girl?

It was this, it was the picture she presented in her trailing silken skirts, and false golden hair, and rouge-bedaubed cheeks—she, the daughter of a stern puritan preacher—she, the child of churches and the Sunday schools—it was this that wrung from me that anguished cry.

To her the shock of the meeting was fully as severe. Had I been a ghost come from the grave, she could have looked no more confounded.

When my veil fell and disclosed my identity, she was within reach of my outstretched arm. She did not spring away from my grasp; with her eyes fixed on my face, she slowly backed from me until she stood against the wall on the opposite side. As she *moved from me*, over her face, *under* the red painted spots, crept the same

pallor that had whitened it at sight of me on the wharf.

"Emily," I said, as tenderly as I could, "*will* you not speak to me? Have you forgotten your sister Hester? I have had so long—so long a search for you. Emily—Oh Emily!"

As I spoke, another change went over her—a strange, unpleasant change, as she stood still staring at me; a cold, bold, defiant look gradually crept over her face, which drove all hope from my heart.

"Well!" she said, in a hard metallic voice, "*what* is it?"

"*What is it?*" I repeated, confounded and confused.

"Yes," she cried, in the same bold, defiant way, "what is it? What do you want? You have taken the trouble to find me—what is it? Say it out; I am ready, but be quick. I am looking for a visitor *you* may not wish to see."

With a cool air of audacity she looked at her watch.

I nerved myself to speak steadily.

"You will have time enough, Emily—*I* am the visitor you are looking for."

"*You?*"

"If you refer to that personal in the *Delta*, I am the person expected."

"Oh!" she said, with an artificial laugh, painful to hear, "who would have guessed that sober, old, sedate Hester could get up spicy personals? Here I've been puzzling my brain as to who the fellow was! Ha! ha! ha!"

This was horrible. No maniac's laugh could be more discordant. How was I to deal with her in this mood? My distress found vent in tears. I stood still and wept, afraid to move from the door, lest she should escape and vanish from my sight for ever. I knew her impetuous, wilful nature. Even when a child, it was her impulse to run from anything unpleasant. At first the sight of my silent tears irritated her. This increased my distress and despair. All that I had arranged in my mind to say to her

vanished, or seemed weak and useless. I wept on without a word.

Another change went over her face—the hardness softened, the anger subsided, a serious and high solemnity seemed to fill her.

"What is the use of all that, Hester?" she asked sadly. "It does no good; why did you seek me? What do you expect to gain? What do you want?"

"I want *you*, Emily!—I want to gain *you*—Oh, my sister—*you!*"

A passion of tears impeded my utterance.

"And if you had me, Hester," she said, in the same sad, subdued way, "what could you do with me?—feed me, clothe me, house me—you, who can hardly feed, clothe, and house yourself? Why talk unreasonably? We are both poor women, cast on the world to live as best we may; *you* earn your living one way, *I* another; why bother about it?"

"But, oh Emily! *how* do you earn yours?"

"The only way I can," she answered doggedly.

"Is it a good way, Emily? Is it an honest way? Is it a—a—*decent* way?—Oh my sister!

Decent? No. *Good?* a thousand times No. *Honest?* Yes; honest as any trade where the traders are a man and a woman. *Our* business is a matter of bargain and sale."

"Bargain and sale!" I gasped; the coarse hardihood of her words confounded me.

"Yes, bargain and sale. It is a mean business, a hateful business, ruinous to body and soul—but what else can I do? Must I walk into the river, or drink poison, as I am often tempted to do?"

"Emily! Emily!" I cried, "have you forgotten all your past life?—the sermons you have heard, the Sunday-school lessons, the prayers you have sent up to the Throne of Grace?—are all those pious years to go for nought? Oh, Emily! come back before it is too late!"

"It is too late now," she answered doggedly, "and you know it. Bah!" she burst out almost fiercely, "how can you talk to such as I of going

back to your churches, and Sunday schools, and prayer meetings? Do you take me for a fool, or are you one yourself? Do you not *know* your churches would scorn me? your Sunday schools cast me out? your prayer meetings shun me as a leper? Do you not *know* that every Christian gathering would stone me from their midst?"

"The days for stoning women are passed, Emily," I said gently; her intense and violent feeling shocked and pained me.

"I grant you, as to the *literal* granite stones," she answered; "but there are looks that hurt like hard stone, and men and women cast such looks on wretches like me. Do you think we are dogs, and feel not? Do you think, dog-like, we will seek those who scorn us?—that we love to put ourselves in the way of your Christian stones?"

"You know *I* would not stone you—*Emily*." I stretched out my arms with an impulse to clasp her.

"If you would not, Hester, you are the one exception on earth. Even the father who gave me life, and from whom I inherited those defects that make me what I am, rather than see him face to face, I would leap from yonder window and make of my body a hideous mass of human flesh."

"Emily!" I said, terrified at her force of feeling, "have you no fear of God?—no dread of eternal wrath?"

"Women who lead *our* lives," she answered gloomily, "lose all fear. *Our* hell is here on earth; we live it each moment we breathe."

"If you speak truly, if you truly hate this life, why not cease it at once? Do you value fine clothes, and carpets, and furniture so much?"

She gave me a look of contemptuous scorn.

"*Fine clothes, fine furniture,*" she repeated. "You talk like an idiot, Hester, and men talk like idiots on this subject. When the proprietor of a hotel fits up his house with fine furniture, is it because he himself wants such luxuries, or

to please his customers and increase his trade? Did that shopman over the way make his saloon so splendid with gilded mirrors, and pictures, and cut glass to please his own fancy for finery, or to catch the eye of men who live but to eat, and drink, and smoke? I happen to know the man's family; they live in an humble and plain style. The man puts finery in his saloon to attract custom. That is the way with us—*our* splendid show is in the way of trade."

"Emily, you do not realise how dreadful all this seems—this talk of your way of life as a trade."

"And *you* do not realise how dreadful all this *is*. Some day a woman from our ranks will arise and write a book about the way we live; never until this is done will the world know how false, how unnatural, how cruel is this trade we live by. Until some woman speaks the world will never know, for we deceive the men with whom we associate, we hide our disgust, our pains and penalties; we keep up a gay and

smiling outside sham—we are bitterness and gall within. *Men* call us '*Women of pleasure.*' This tells the tale — this sarcastic cognomen shows how little men understand us, or the nature God gave us. Better they should call us women of pain."

"Emily, if you are honest in what you say ——"

"*Honest?* Can you not judge for yourself? Do you not know that any creature whose life is exactly opposed to the dictates of nature—exactly opposed to the instincts God has implanted in its physical being—is bound to be unhappy—is bound to suffer mentally and bodily? Did God intend women to live this life? You know He did not. Women are created by the Almighty to love one man, and the children she bears. This life of ours is directly opposed to the intention of the Almighty, and we are cursed for it—cursed here in this life —perhaps in the life to come."

"Then, my sister, as you so hate this life, you will no longer live it, you will quit it at once.

For six weeks I have tramped these streets in search of you. I shall never give you up—you must come with me."

"Hester, you talk as if I were free to quit this business and pursue a more respectable one; in other words, free to associate with respectable people."

"Who will hinder?"

"Ah! who? That is the question always put by persons who have not studied this matter. *I* have studied it, and *I* tell you all the past and the present ages press down on the prostitute. Look at facts! Men rule, women are ruled; men are masters, women are slaves; men hold the purse, women are penniless. It is this state of things that makes our class, *not* the inclination of our hearts. Oh! could you know how we hate and abhor men! While some men use every cunning art, every grace of mind and person, as well as the power of the purse, to seduce women into the downward path; all men by common consent combine to hold them in

that path when once they have entered it. What woman is permitted to retrace her steps after once she has gone astray? Who offers a helping hand to the young girl who slips and falls? Neither man nor woman. On the contrary, every woman is against her, and gives her a shove down the inclined plane to ruin. The poor prostitute may think she is free to return to higher walks, to a purer life—let her try it. She will find she is spotted. Every man becomes a detective, and she is watched by argus eyes. The first step she takes back to the path of purity, some one of the many detectives hauls her back. Do you think we never try to return? Do you think it is so easy to forget the religion of our earlier days? Do you think we are cattle, and totally callous to the scorn the world covers us with? Do you think we are dumb dogs, not to feel bitterly, keenly, the inequality in the punishment meted out to erring mortals, male and female? I have tried this thing of seeking honest work, and have failed every time—not

failed to find the honest work, but failed to keep it. Always some man would discover my first fault and betray it to my employers, under the plea that I might corrupt some other woman—as if women are not always led into this business by some man, never by a woman; a vile woman may aid the man, but the man is always the principal in the evil work. I tell you, Hester, I know of things that would make your blood curdle and your hair stand on end with horror—the wrongs done those women, the cruelty, the indignities—yet who cares? who pities? If African slaves suffered as women of this class often suffer, the world would weep sympathetic tears and hold indignation meetings. But as it is only outcast women, the world laughs and jeers."

"Emily, the world does not sympathise, because it cannot understand why you continue a business if it is certain to bring you misery and discomfort. The world accepts the cognomen, '*Women of Pleasure,*' and honestly believes you find pleasure in your way of life."

"And the world shows itself the ass it is! Does the world reason? Does it analyse? Does it go back to find the causes of vice? One of two things is plain to any reasoning mind: either the trade of Prostitution is in accordance with the nature of women, or it is not. I, who speak from experience, say it is not. I say it is directly and for ever opposed to every instinct of woman's being as God created her—it is a most foul, false, unnatural trade. Why do so many fly from it to death? Watch the papers; in what other class do you see young girls so freely drink poison, so swiftly leap into the lakes and rivers? Who gives a thought to the madness and misery of these young creatures? The newspapers of the day chronicle the fact of a suicide among the *demi-monde* with as little thought as they would give to the death of an African monkey. Yet not one of these *demi-mondes* was born an outcast, or born of an outcast mother. Oh no! they are children of your churches, pupils of your Sunday schools, they are daughters of your

pious people, preachers, and teachers. They are the women cast on the world to make a living for themselves; sooner or later they come to places hard to pull over, poverty pinches, little by little they are *pushed* into this wretched business. The love of life is strong, even in a dog or worm, and women often walk under an avalanche of misery before they finally resolve to cut the mortal coil and rest in death. Bread is at the bottom of our trade, yet you and the idiotic world talk of fine clothes—*fine clothes!* Can you for one single instant conceive what it is to be an OUTCAST?—outcast from homes and hearts, from churches and charities, forgotten by fathers, by mothers, by brothers, by sisters. It is awful. Sometimes"—as she spoke she swept her tall form to the middle of the floor and stood with her large eyes fixed afar off, gazing beyond the walls into illimitable space—"sometimes," she said, "I feel myself the centre, the lone figure in a vast circle; all beyond is darkness—death; all within, misery and ruin. Wrecked

hopes and false faiths lie around me dead, dead! as the dry leaves that strew the wintry woods."

So strongly did this picture of desolation affect me, that a cold shiver of horror shook me, my knees gave way, and I sank to the floor—not falling prostrate, but in a kneeling position. The tears of a painful pity rained from my eyes. Remember it was *my* sister who drew the picture, a girl whom I knew to have once been possessed of pride, self-will, and refinement. I held out my arms toward her, I longed to hold her to my breast; she thought she was scorned and forgotten by all—she should never think it of me.

When she came back, as it were, from that vast circle wherein lay her false faiths and wrecked hopes as dead as the dry leaves that fall in the wintry forest, she looked at me kneeling, weeping, with outstretched arms, an infinite pity in her sad eyes.

"Poor Hester," she said, in a gentle, thoughtful tone, "if the aim of human existence is

human happiness here on earth, what woeful failures your life and mine will prove."

"But, Emily," I earnestly argued, "you must remember, you cannot have forgotten, the teachings of early years. The aim of human life is *not* happiness in this world, but happiness in the world to come. It is that you may gain that everlasting happiness in a future life I so anxiously entreat you to come back to the Church and the religion in which you were nurtured."

"It is easy to say 'come back;' the more pride we have, the more keen sensitiveness to the scorn of our kind, the harder to face it, harder to put ourselves where we know sharp shafts will be sent straight to the centre of our hearts."

She sat down, her head drooped, she remained fixed in thought for a minute or two.

"Hester," she said, "go home now, we are both wearied with excitement, go home; come to-morrow at 10 in the morning and I will tell you my story, how I happened to fall into this bad way, which you know I never intended to enter."

She looked pale and haggard *under* the artificial colour on her cheeks. I went without a word, but she would not give me her hand in parting, she shrunk away silently from my touch.

On returning, I found that Julius had engaged our passage up to Red Leaf on the *Reindeer*, and was a little anxious to get us out of the city. Although we had been very careful, he dreaded the possibility of detection in the Master's case. It was arranged to leave at 3 p.m. next day. I determined to take Emily with me, believing I could risk an hospitable reception. I would not mention her to Julius until the hour arrived.

At 10 next day I again rapped at Emily's door. I felt confident of gaining her consent to my plans. I had not slept an hour during the night, for thinking over what she had said, and framing plans for our future—plans that always embraced her in them. We would never return to the cold clime of our nativity—never

go where her faults were public property. The South was large. In many, many things the South was preferable to the North—it was a fresher field for energies, the climate was less inhospitable, the character of the people was pleasant and friendly, provided their prejudices were not too audaciously defied. The war was surely drawing to a close. So soon as peace was declared, and the Southern people lay prostrate at the feet of the North, there would be work for a thousand such women as Emily and myself. A new struggle would begin between the North and the South—a struggle to gain possession of the African mind, of the freedmen's vote and influence at the polls. This would employ thousands of men and women from the North. Emily and I would remain in the South, and devote ourselves to the education of the ex-slaves.

I knocked at her door, full of these pleasant plans, which gave bright promise of prosperity. There was no response. I knocked again, and

again there was no response. I turned the door softly, and stood in the threshold.

Had I been a fainting woman, I must have fainted at the cruel blow I received. With one exception, the room was empty. Not another thing, living or dead, was in it—not a vestige of all its yesterday's splendour. Walls and windows and floor were bare. Mirrors and pictures and silken curtains and velvet carpets were vanished. I did not faint, but a great sickness of the heart fell on me—a nervous prostration seized me. I could scarcely drag myself down the steps to the street.

Emily had kept her promise about giving me the story of her life. On the mantel was a packet of papers, addressed to me.

There may be women, and there may be men, who will object to the introduction of Emily's story, as treating of topics supposed to be altogether unknown to the young and innocent of the female sex. It is the singular theory of men that it is the proper and becoming thing for

young women either to be, or to affect to be, ignorant of the existence of certain forms of vice, and mothers make the mistake of trying to keep them ignorant. Girls discover this effort; and the consequence is, some become morbidly curious, and obtain unhealthy information, and others remain in a childlike state of innocence. Is there any safeguard a young person can have like the safeguard of knowledge? Young girls set out gaily, sailing over the sea of life with cheerful and unchecked confidence. No chart is placed in their hands, showing the hidden rocks and dangerous straits that have wrecked and ruined so many before. Especially is the young girl not warned of the latent passions—the sleeping instincts of her own nature—which, in an unsuspected moment, may awaken from their torpor, and stir such a mutiny in her breast as only reason, trained to watch and trained to govern and direct, can control or subdue. If it is common for young girls brought up in the churches and the Sunday

schools—girls neither heathens nor Mahomedans —to fall into the evil ways Emily fell into, it is right to point out the path that led to such ways. Believing this, I give my sister's story word for word.

CHAPTER XIII.

EMILY'S STORY.

WHEN I left father's house, had any one predicted I would become the thing I am, I would have pronounced such prophet crazy. At that time my only thought was to earn a decent support by honest labour. *You* know, Hester, I was neither lazy or luxurious. I found work in a distant village in a minister's house. I had met this minister when at my aunt's going to school. He evinced much interest in my studies, and in other respects manifested much kindness. He was the first person in the world who discovered anything in me worthy of interest, worthy of commendation. My first feeling toward him was heart-felt gratitude. If you remember, Hester, father never praised, he

always found fault, he disparaged every effort we might make, whatever the direction. I had grown up with a secret belief that I was uncouth and altogether unlovely. This minister, Mr. Jermym, was the first to give me the idea that I was even passably good-looking, or that it was even possible I might win love as more gifted women do. You must also remember, Hester, coming from a minister, this had not only double but quadruple weight with me. We had been brought up to look on preachers as on the Lord's anointed; as the best and truest of men, as but little lower than the angels; as standing between the great and awful God and sinning people to make known His will. Educated thus, is it any wonder so many women make themselves fools about preachers?

Mrs. Jermym was a patient, sweetly-disposed woman, an invalid, far gone in consumption. My business was to take care of Mrs. Jermym and superintend the house. The labour was light and not disagreeable, the pay a trifle. I

was contented. In a hundred little ways Mr. Jermym made my stay in his house pleasant. I was treated as a daughter of the family; they were old enough to be my parents. You know, Hester, how stern and unloving father was, how every joy was killed or chilled; you may imagine my pleasure in this home, where my comforts and wants were considered. The world grew brighter to me. The clouds that had shadowed my childhood's life began to drift away into the dark and dimly-remembered past. Every day added to the buoyancy and happiness of my nature. Nor did Mr. Jermym's kindness abate. On the contrary, it grew, until I came to depend on him for evidences and tokens of affection, as a child depends on a father.

In all this time not once did a suspicion of evil design enter my mind, nor did one feeling enter my heart that I might not have given to a tender father. Remember, Hester, although I was eighteen, I was more ignorant of the human heart, its many treacherous passions and desires,

than a city girl of fewer years. I had read nothing, not even the light literature of the day. You know that all works that treated of love or passion between the sexes, whether by poet, novelist, or scientist, were rigidly excluded from our sight.

Human love we were taught to condemn, Christly love to cultivate. Thus it happened I was as unsuspicious as a child.

Had Mr. Jermym been a young unmarried man, doubtless I would have been quick enough to suspect his intentions. But a minister, married, and old enough to be my father, I had no more fear of him than of Julius, or of my own father. More often than otherwise he addressed me as "My daughter — my dear daughter." I am sure at that stage I loved him as a daughter would. Little by little he began to caress me, but always in a fatherly way, and I came to look for such attentions as a petted child, and if he neglected me, I felt hurt and uneasy lest he was displeased with me.

Once a brother minister came to make a visit, and stayed a week with Mr. Jermym. The two preachers were together almost all the time. During all that week Mr. Jermym behaved to me in a very cold and formal way. Instead of calling me "daughter" or "Emily," he addressed me as Miss Stanhope. He scarcely seemed to see me. I fancied I had offended him in some way, and would lie awake thinking over all I had done that might possibly have displeased him.

On Saturday Mrs. Jermym sent me to his study to get a book. I expected to find the two preachers together—I only found one. He was writing his sermon for the next day. I stood watching him write. Without looking up, he said, "I wish you could stay and preach to my people to-morrow."

So deeply did I feel his neglect, I almost sobbed as I said—

"It is not the preacher, it is only I."

"Ah!" he cried, looking up quickly and gladly —"My little Emily!"

The unexpected kindness quite overcame me, tears started from my eyes. He got up from his writing, the tenderest solicitude in his tone and his eyes, and urged me to tell him my grief. He did not touch me, did not lay his hand fondly on my head, as had been his wont, or draw me to his side, as he sometimes did, so I fancied he was still displeased with me. He stood off, his hands behind him, looking straight at me.

My tears flowed with renewed force—fool that I was!

"Emily," he said, earnestly, "I beg you tell me what distresses you; has Mrs. Jermym said anything to you?"

I told him no; Mrs. Jermym was always good.

"Who is not good to you here, in this house?" he asked, with great solicitude.

Then I stammered out the inquiry, "How had I offended *him?* What had I done? How displeased?

"Why do you think me displeased?" he asked, in a low voice.

"*Why?* Because he had been so changed all the week—so cold, so formal, I knew he was displeased."

Then he suddenly closed the study door, which had been half open all this time, first looking up and down the hall. He came swiftly up and caught me in his arms, and kissed me over and over.

"Displeased with you, my poor girl," he murmured in a low tone, "I am only too well pleased —too well."

Footsteps in the hall warned him in time. When his guest came in, Mr. Jermym was writing, and I was looking for the book.

This was the beginning. After that, whenever I was alone with him, he manifested his affection. Hester, as God is my witness, I did not know, I did not then suspect, and for long, long after, what was the real nature of that affection.

Mr. Jermym was not a handsome or attractive person; he was as little like my ideal lover as

possible. I solemnly aver my belief that but for his high position as minister and as man, and my low position as a woman—homeless, penniless, objectless, and educated to believe preachers purer, holier, than other men—added to the fact that he was the first man who felt for me the slightest preference,—but for these reasons, I never would have submitted to his will, or yielded to his arguments. His wife was fast dying of consumption; all hope of recovery was gone; he was not an unkind or neglectful husband, and Mrs. Jermym died in the belief that he was good and faithful; but he certainly counted on her death, and made me believe he would marry me as soon as he was free.

I do not offer this as an excuse for my conduct. I know well how criminal it was. I know too well what a fool, what an idiot I was, to abase myself as I did—to risk my all on such a throw. If there was a law to hang such women, without judge or jury, the world would be the better off.

I was three months *enciente* when Mrs.

Jermym died. As soon as the funeral was over, Mr. Jermym sent me out of the house.

"It would not be thought proper," he said, "for a young woman to remain in the house with an unmarried minister."

I found lodgings in a country place twenty miles distant from Carrolton. It was agreed that Mr. Jermym should marry me privately before the birth of the child.

Hester, if you or any one supposes that in yielding to Mr. Jermym I followed the instincts of my own passions, you make a mistake. I have now no motive for misrepresenting the case. The child I bore is a girl. I have studied this matter, and talked with many girls who have fallen as I; and, for the sake of my daughter, I wish the fact known that more girls fall from a weak desire to please the man who importunes, and to whom they feel under obligations for benefits received, than in obedience to their own impulses. Is it strange that weak, ignorant girls should yield to the tears, prayers,

promises of men whom they have been educated to consider greatly superior beings?

For a while all went smoothly. I busied myself making small garments for the expected stranger. I flattered myself this child would give great pleasure to its father; he had no child by his wife, and seemed to feel it as a misfortune.

As time went on, and still he came not, a strange uneasiness began to agitate my mind. What if he never came? What if I should become that pitiable object, a mother with no husband? I wrote urgent appeals for an interview. His replies were guarded and unsatisfactory. Suspicion once aroused became watchful, wakeful, and keen-eyed. I looked carefully over all the letters he had written me. In not one was there an intimation of our connection. He had often sent me sums of money, but in no letter did he mention the fact. The subject was so skilfully treated, that at the time the letters were received they caused no misgivings. That he had used such caution

in the early days of our acquaintance was convincing proof of planned and intended treachery. It was a sudden and dreadful revelation.

The things that I had done now made themselves scourges, and lashed me with remorseless fury. In all the world there was not one being to whom I could carry my troubles, from whom I could ask advice or sympathy. Days and weeks and months rolled by, and every hope fled. His letters grew every day more and more formal, came at longer intervals, and then only in answer to my urgent appeals. The sums of money he had now and then sent me were almost exhausted, and no more was sent.

I felt that my life was wrecked. More than once I walked to the river to end it. Fool that I was, coward that I was, to shrink back and shiver at the sight of death, when my only alternative was a life of shame.

The child, to whose coming I had once looked so fondly forward, I now loathed to think of. Its gentle throbs, which once had thrilled me

with a strange and sweet rapture, now maddened me, as though a monster had found lodgment under my heart. In the dead of night I would wake, and wait and watch for its movements, bathed in a cold sweat of horror; and sometimes a fierce desire would seize me to wrench its hated life from mine, and fling it from me as I would have flung a reptile.

At length I resolved on action. I saw, or thought I saw, that Mr. Jermym counted on my silence, believing my pride would prevent any movement that would lead to publicity. I determined to disappoint this expectation. I packed my things, and went back to Carrolton.

I did not go at once to the minister's house. There was a woman who washed for her living, a Mrs. Mill, whose honest industry commanded respect, and whose child I had once carefully nursed through a lingering fever. I asked this woman to board me for a few days. She eyed me curiously, and observed how much I had grown since I left Carrolton. Then she asked

why I had returned. "Did I expect to go back to Mr. Jermym's when the new mistress was come?"

"What new mistress?" I asked.

"You haint heard, then," she answered, "as how the parson is going to marry the widow White?"

This, then, explained his conduct. The widow White was a rich and childless woman, with many friends. I was poor and friendless.

And I had wrecked my life for so mean a man as that!

Mrs. Mill was to take the parson's washing home that day. I sent a note by her containing only one line—

"Will you come to me, or shall I go to you?"

A verbal answer was returned—"He would call and see me very soon."

I waited that day and night, he did not come. I waited all next day, and he did not come.

Hester, you know the Stanhopes have a stern and grim sort of pride; you can imagine the

self-scorn that stung me at my own abasement to this man. I resolved to wait no longer. I went to his house about four o'clock in the afternoon. A strange servant answered the bell. She said Mr. Jermym had gone to the widow White's; he might be home to tea, or he might take tea out—it was uncertain. I told her who I was, and asked permission to wait until he returned; my business was important.

It was a raw, cold day, and the servant asked me to sit in the kitchen, where she was ironing, as the fire had gone out in the study. I sat in the kitchen. The woman gossiped about the small affairs of the house. It was torture to listen. The magnitude of my own concerns forbade all thought of lighter things.

The slow hours went by, the sun went down, and still he was not come. Seven, eight, nine, ten o'clock struck. The woman said she would wait no longer; she went to bed, and told me I could go to my old room when I wanted to sleep. *Sleep?* when every nerve and fibre was racked.

I could not rest—I could not sleep. Rest and sleep seemed for ever banished from the world. I walked the floor like one possessed,—Oh God! I *was* possessed—devils were in me, and devils around me. Could my hands have clutched his throat then, in those hours of torturing thought, his life would have paid the forfeit.

Eleven o'clock, twelve, and still I walked the floor, and still he did not come. Then a curious fear rose in my mind. I knew he was a man of regular habits. What was keeping him now?

Was I cheated of my revenge by some swift, sweeping Nemesis, all too eager to wreak ill on so mean a creature?

Then the small hours of the night tolled one, two, three, four, five, and still I walked the floor. The lamp had burned down, the fire had long since gone out, streaks of light in the eastern sky told of the coming day. I shivered in the chill air. Words cannot describe the misery of mind and body that seized me in that early morning time. From top to toe Pain, the tor-

turer, had me in his merciless grip, wringing nerves and stretching sinews, until I became a living anguish. The curse of the first woman was upon me. The dread hour was come—a dark and bitter hour even for a woman lapped and wrapped in the folds of a warm love, surrounded by tender friends, husband, and mother, and physician;—how was it for me, in that despair and darkness?—for me, homeless, houseless, friendless, forsaken, and the scorn of the world ready to fall and crush me.

With the cold grey light of day the servant woman came in to make the fire for breakfast. Seeing my ghastly face and pain-wrung body, she broke into cries of alarm.

"What was the matter? Had I sat up all night?

She felt my hands; they were like ice. She said the cold had made me ill, and urged me to go to bed until the fire was made; hot tea would make me all right.

Tea! to medicine ills like mine!

I went to my old room and bed, more to escape the woman's eyes than to seek rest. I covered my head with blankets to stifle my moans.

After a while I heard the sound of booted feet in the hall and my own name uttered, then the door opened. Mr. Jermym and the cook woman entered my room. At the same instant a feeble cry, an infant's first wail, broke on the morning air. I saw amazement and horror in the preacher's face, consternation in the woman's. Then slowly, very slowly and softly, as it seemed to me, I felt myself sliding away—away into limitless space. The man and the woman melted out of sight, melted into viewless air; all outer and earthly sounds, even the strange wail of the new-born soul, died out in the distance and the darkness to which I was gently borne. For a time I rested in that sweet oblivion.

Cruel fate would not leave me there. All too soon I was brought back from that sweet rest to a full consciousness of the misery that was mine.

When I looked around, the preacher was gone; his cook and three other women were in the room. A fire had been made. Beside the fire sat a woman with a small bundle on her lap. From the bundle, ever and anon, came the feeble cry of the new-born child.

"She's come to herself, we must get her ready to go," said one of the women, looking straight at me.

"It's rather rough out doors," remarked the cook, stirring the fire; "if the poor thing should die of cold?"

"Phoo! sich as she aint easy to kill!" answered one of the women.

"We can wrap her up warm," said another.

"It won't do for her to stay *here* in the parson's house, that's clear; so, you see, we're obliged to send her away, and the sooner it's done the better."

They all consented to this.

I lifted my head, and asked *why* I could not stay in the parson's house?

"Come, young woman," was the reply, "you keep quiet. It don't become such as *you* to talk about parsons and parsons' houses. If you'd had proper respect for parsons, and their houses, and the Church, you would'nt a come here disgracing 'em all a borning babies in preachers' houses, with no sort of father to speak of."

"*My* baby has a father, and if you want to know his name, I will tell you."

"You should have gone to its father's house, if he has a house," said one of the women, "and not come here, giving our preacher such a deal of trouble."

"An' he no wife in the house—poor dear man," cried another.

I raised myself up in the bed, and looked at them steadily.

"I came here," I said, "because it is fit and proper that a preacher's child should be born in its father's house. Go and bid your preacher come and see his child."

The four women lifted up their hands in

horror, and vied with each other in denunciations of my awful wickedness.

"The shameless huzzy," cried one.

"You're a bold one, *you* are," exclaimed another.

"Young woman," said a third, with deep solemnity, "you had better get on your knees and pray. Remember you are slandering God's minister."

Then one of the women came up to the bed and said a carriage was waiting, I must go back to where I was staying. I was bundled up and pushed into a one-horse vehicle, the baby was put in my lap, and the driver told to take me back to Mrs. Mill's.

Strange to say, I did not get sick; was it the strong, fierce feelings that kept me up? One idea haunted me, one thought, one hope—the hope of revenge. I dreamed of it by day and by night.

You may wish to know if this created no stir in the community, if the Church took no action

in this matter? The Church acted as Churches usually do when the character of a man and a minister is assailed by a woman, and the woman is poor and friendless. A committee was appointed ostensibly to examine the case—in reality to whitewash the preacher and sustain the dignity of the Church. The pastor's testimony was taken. He not only declared his own innocence, but blackened my character by the most unfounded stories. During the last year of my stay in Mr. Jermym's house he had a hired man working in his garden—a common illiterate labourer. This man was now in California. Mr. Jermym informed his deacons I had shown such a bold familiarity with his hired man as to give his wife great uneasiness, and he himself had often remonstrated with me on my immodest behaviour.

Of course I was crushed. The man and minister was more than a match for the disgraced, solitary woman. Had I followed the horrible trade of harlotry for twenty years, I could not

have been more outcast from human fellowship. No soul came near me. Men, women, and children turned aside from my path, as if in my garments I held the seeds of all pestilence. And all the time that man and hypocrite went on preaching and praying, baptising babies and burying the dead. He was rich and prosperous; his second wife brought him a fortune.

Did I ever see him again? I hear you ask that question, Hester.

Yes, once. I had intended when I met him that a tragedy should be enacted. I had worked hard helping Mrs. Mill to wash and iron, and with my first money bought a second-hand pistol. I practised shooting till I was no mean expert. Then I waited and waited my chance. It was slow in coming, but at last it came. There was a little strip of wood near the village; a footpath ran through it. One day going along that path I saw a man coming toward me—a man on a pony. I knew him at once, and dodged behind a tree, lest he should know me and escape

the meeting. When he came within my reach, I sprang out, seized the bridle near the bit, and called a halt. The perjurer, slanderer, and minister turned so white I thought he was about to faint. At no time a large man of imposing presence, at that moment he seemed smaller than ever—he seemed to shrink and shrivel under the fire of my eyes. I pulled his horse deeper into the woods, lest some person might chance to stray that way. Evidently he thought I was going to murder him.

"What—what do—you want with me, *Emily?*" he stammered, with white lips.

"A reckoning, Mr. Jermym—a settlement of our account."

"Do—do you—mean to—kill me—*Emily?*" he faltered, looking up and around, as if hoping for assistance.

I had my pistol in one hand. The sight of it unmanned him. He thought his last hour was come.

I took the whip from his hands, bade him dis-

mount, slipped the saddle off, gave the pony a sharp cut with the lash, which sent him trotting away out of sight.

"If—if—you kill me, Emily," he whined, "I shall not blame you; but—but the world will. Think of your own life, *Emily*. It will go for mine."

"*My* life!" I cried fiercely. "Do you suppose I value it above an oyster's since *you* have polluted it?"

I bade him fall on his knees. I held the pistol cocked and my finger on its trigger. His mean life hung on a thread; I had meant to kill him, yet I did not. I cannot tell what withheld my hand. It certainly was not fear of a retribution on myself. What cared *I* for any death that might come? *I* was wrecked and lost, and had no hope. Had he resisted me one inch I would have shot him, but he did not resist. He obeyed me implicitly, he knelt before me in the most abject way. I could not kill so poor a thing. I slipped the pistol back in my pocket and laid the

lash on his shrinking form. I marked him head, ears, face, and shoulders, and then bade him go and tell his Church, his deacons, and sisters that I, the outcast, I, the leper, had laid my lash upon him.

Thus, what I intended should be a tragedy turned into a low farce.

I fully expected this bold action would stir the village to rise against me. Nothing was said about it. Mrs. Mill went to his house the next day, and was told that the minister was quite ill with the rheumatism.

The story never got abroad. How he explained it to his wife I never knew; but I felt confident, had he told her the truth, it would have leaked out and become general property.

Was I totally depraved at this time? If by total depravity is meant a desire to continue in the career of vice, I was not depraved. At that time I utterly hated the things I had once loved —that had led me into bad ways—personal adornment, the admiration of men. I would

walk out of my way a mile to keep from meeting a man. I disliked and distrusted every male of the human species. Had my child been a boy, I should—no, not have hated, but loved it less. The child had sweet ways, and after a while I began to think of what I must do to keep it in comfort, and give it some chance for happiness in life. By the hardest work I earned but a pittance—barely enough to keep us in clothes and food. I made arrangements with Mrs. Mill to keep the child, while I went off to another county in search of more remunerative work. Fearing the dreadful odium that covered my name in Carrolton would follow me wherever I went, I took another name—Emily Smith—and made another start in the world—a wiser, if not a better woman.

I engaged myself as nurserymaid and governess in a merchant's family. Mr. and Mrs. Simpkins were strict church people. After two years' absence from all churches, I once more resumed attendance. I dressed in the plainest way, I

shunned all male company, stayed at home every evening reading or sewing, declined to join a singing class because it would take me out too often—in fact, lived the quietest life possible. To live thus was really in accordance with my inclinations. I had come to think men the natural enemies of women, and wished to avoid them, as we avoid dangerous things.

Mrs. Simpkins thought she had a model servant, and I was contented with my situation. The pay was small, but it sufficed. Once every three months I remitted money to the woman who kept my child.

The laboured letter which acknowledged its receipt told me of its welfare, and this was all the break to the monotony of my existence.

But all this was to end.

By a strange fatality, preachers seemed destined to destroy me.

One day Mr. Simpkins told his wife a preacher from Rhode Island would be their guest for a few days; a protracted meeting was going on in

the town, and the village preacher had sent for assistance.

In the visitor I recognised the very preacher who had been Mr. Jermym's guest that week I had distressed myself by imagining I had displeased him in some way.

Although alarmed, there was no way to evade his presence. The man looked at me keenly when he heard my name, Smith, but said nothing. The next morning a letter, addressed to Mr. Jermym at Carrolton, was sent to the post office. The preacher handed it to Mr. Simpkins to post. The name was read out, and Mr. Jermym's character as a preacher was discussed. Mr. Simpkins had heard him preach, and thought him a good man, but rather mild in the manner of his sermons—not stirring enough.

"Yes," replied the guest, his small eyes fixed on me, as I sat at my sewing,—"yes; as you say, Brother Jermym is too mild—too mild and gentle by half; schemers and unprincipled persons

impose on him. Why, sir, a bad case of that sort happened about two years ago—a very bad case.

"Indeed! what was it?" asked Mr. Simpkins.

"Why, in the simplicity of his heart, Brother Jermym gave a home to a young woman, in the hope of keeping her out of bad company. This was during his wife's lifetime. The girl was innately bad—no kindness softened her. She fell into vile ways, and grossly slandered the good man who had endeavoured to save her from her own sinful nature. The church, however, promptly squelched the scandal, and Brother Jermym stands higher than ever among his people."

I bent over my work, but knew he was watching me. I made a strong effort to make no show of feeling, but was conscious of the ebb and flow of blood, from heart to face and face to heart.

Nothing more occurred to alarm me on that day, nor on the next. I began to hope the preacher did not mean to betray my secret. On

the third day a letter was handed him at the dinner-table.

"Ah!" he said, as he looked at the writing, "from Brother Jermym, that—*good* man."

He looked at me as he lingered on the word "*good*." He did not read the letter there. I saw no more of him that day. On the next, as I was in the nursery with the children, giving them their lessons, a message came to me. Mr. Simpkins wanted me in the parlour.

I knew then all was over.

I nerved myself to what calmness I could, and walked steadily, with a firm step, to meet the trio of judges and accusers, who were in the parlour awaiting the coming of the culprit.

The preacher sat by the table, on which was the family Bible and hymn-book. The ten fingers of his two hands were touching each other, his mouth was drawn down, his whole face had put on its most solemn and ministerial expression. Mrs. Simpkins looked pale and scared. Mr. Simpkins formally offered me a chair.

Mr. Simpkins was about to address me, when the preacher interrupted.

"Brother Simpkins," he said, "in a case like this it is fit and proper first to address the throne of grace. Let us pray."

All fell on their knees except myself. By this time a hard angry feeling had cased me in. I sat stiff and bolt upright. *Prayer?* There was no prayer in me at that moment. On the contrary, a desperate desire to denounce, to brave, and defy. I controlled myself and sat as still as stone.

After the long prayer, which was meant far more for my ears than the Creator's, they once more sat in their chairs and resumed their magisterial air. The preacher fixed his finger-tips in the same precise way, and drew down the corners of his mouth to a due degree of piety.

"Brother Simpkin," he said, slowly, "we may now begin."

"Miss Smith," began Mr. Simpkins, trembling

with the importance of his work, "Were you ever in Carrolton, Connecticut?"

"Yes, sir."

I had swiftly settled it in my own mind to speak the truth, to attempt no denial or evasion.

A groan from the preacher, a sigh from Simpkins, while Mrs. Simpkins looked more scared than ever.

"Will you be so good as to tell us what you did while in Carrolton?"

"I worked for my living."

"What sort of work?"

"For the first sixteen months I lived in a— preacher's house, and took care of his sick wife."

Another groan from the preacher.

"What name did you go by then?"

"My own name; Emily Stanhope."

"Ah!"

There was a pause. It seemed they had not counted on getting such direct and decisive answers, and hesitated what next to say. At length—

"Why did you drop your own name and take a false one?"

"Because my own name had been slandered and lied on; because I believed the self-righteous in this world would see a woman starve before they would give her employment after she had made the one false step Emily Stanhope had made."

This bold speech seemed to fill them with horror. They all stared at me.

"Will you be so good," said Mr. Simpkins, in an icy tone, "as to state to us what was the false step that Miss Emily Stanhope had been so unfortunate as to make?"

"She was weak enough, she was idiot enough, base enough to listen to a preacher's pretended affection: she trusted to his promises of marriage, and bore a child, of which he was the father."

There was a dead stillness for a time. Then Mrs. Simpkins began to cry, and sobbed out something about her poor children, and hopes

that they had not suffered by such companionship.

"You see, Brother Simpkins," said the preacher with solemnity, "the dangerous character of this young woman—altogether an improper person for a—respectable and pious family—a very dangerous inmate. I need not state to you there was a rigid investigation made as to her charges, and their falsity proved beyond a doubt, beyond the question of a doubt, as this young woman knows."

"I know what I say is true," I burst out; "and I know the church deacons decided they were false, as church deacons generally decide a dispute when the disputants are a friendless girl and a rich minister."

"And she's nursed and slept with my innocent children!" sobbed the mother.

"They are not poisoned," I said.

I believed if the woman had been let alone she would not have thought it necessary to pretend to be afraid of me. She liked me; and she

well knew she never could get another girl as faithful and for so little money.

"Young woman," said Mr. Simpkins, severely, "be so good as to remember you are in a decent house. We are Christian people. Don't use obscene language *here;* we cannot tolerate it."

"No; please don't," sobbed the wife. "I am sure I don't know what I'll do about the baby. It's very hard on me—very hard—just as the baby is beginning to teethe; and she really was quite useful."

"My dear," said the husband, in a tone of remonstrance, "we must do our duty in such cases; we must not weakly yield to the impulses of our hearts; we must do our duty, however much it costs us—duty—as—as—Christians—as parents. Society demands it of us. Religion demands it. The young woman must be sent away."

"That is our line of duty," said the preacher, with an approving nod, "and we must pursue it."

Mrs. Simpkins sobbed afresh. Her tears called out more sympathy.

"Sister Simpkins," said the preacher, tenderly, laying his hand on the arm of her chair, "your heart is too soft for scenes like this, your nature is too refined for companionship with the coarse and the vile. [He cast an eye on me]. It is good to remember these afflictions are sent for our good. The hand of the Lord is in this matter. How mysterious the workings of His providence! But for Brother Simpkins' invitation to me to tarry at his house, and partake of his hospitality, the wicked devices of this designing young person would not have been exposed as they have been this day by the blessing of God."

Mrs. Simpkins' feelings were somewhat soothed by the preacher's ministrations.

"Miss Smith or Miss Stanhope," began Mr. Simpkins in a formal and magisterial way, "from this moment our connection ceases. You can no longer remain an inmate of this house.

Here is the money due up to this hour. You will please leave as soon as possible."

"Before we separate," said the preacher, "let us pray—let us pour out petitions to the throne of divine grace to soften and send repentance to this young woman's heart, and turn her from sin to the ways of salvation."

As they fell on their knees I walked out, and up stairs, to put up my things and leave, which I did in less than half-an-hour.

When this occurred it was the beginning of winter. I had but five dollars in all the world. The child had gone through the measles; and every cent of my pitiful pay had been forwarded for its necessities.

In less than a week my story was known to every one in the place, and the most vile exaggerations were added. Not a family would give me employment at any price. I left the town and tried my chance in other localities. Sooner or later the disgrace followed me; there was no escaping it. After some time I found

work with a merchant—a manufacturer of women's underwear. Unfortunately for me my employer was attracted by my appearance, and in many devious ways made known his wishes. He was old.

Should I die, Hester, before my girl is grown, keep this paper, and send it to her when she is fourteen years old. I want her to learn from her mother's bitter experience to beware of old men—of *all* old men—but of old preachers beware as she would of slumbering serpents.

I shunned this man. Instead of attracting he repelled me. His glances, his words, his presence were all hateful to me.

When a poor dependent woman repels the amatory advances of the man who holds her in his power—the man who feels he is the master—it is apt to irritate and anger him. This man was doubly my master; master by the power of his purse, which was heavy; master by the power of his sex, which was strong. *He* was rich, *I* poor; *he* a man, *I* a woman. He resented

my repulses as a personal wrong; he wanted to punish and humble me into submission.

My habits of living, so different from the girls with whom I worked, awakened his suspicions. These girls were careless and thoughtless, as girls usually are—talkative, and fond of amusement. I was reticent, and shunned society. Mr. Cash had me watched, and discovered I had only one correspondent, and that one in Carrolton.

He took the trouble to make a trip to Carrolton. He learned my story, and came back armed, as he thought, with a lever that would move me.

He sent for me to see him in his office, and deliberately laid down his dishonourable proposition and his ultimatum. If I accepted, I should prosper; if I refused, ruin would be mine. He would dismiss me and flaunt my disgrace to the world. He gave me three days to decide.

As I was walking away from the office, his

son Alfred, coming from a rear room, brushed hastily past me. He gave me a look which made me at once suspect he had overheard his father's offer. That night a note was slipped under my door, containing these words—"*Do not yield; you shall not suffer.*" I conjectured that the note was from Alfred Cash.

This young man was good-looking and pleasant-mannered, and had always held himself aloof from the working-girls, who secretly thought of him as if he were a prince.

I was dismissed from work, and again on the world without money. It was in the beginning of winter. The child had to have winter clothes. There came times when I had never a cent on earth, when hunger like a rat gnawed within my stomach, when my clothes were thin and thread-bare, and the bleak winds penetrated to my marrow.

Do you ask about the note, *You shall not suffer*, and its author, Alfred Cash, the prince, the knight-errant, the ideal of the working-girls' fancy?

I tell you, Hester, I hardly think it possible for any man to serve a woman without hope of reward, and especially to serve a poor, half-starved, working woman, without looking for personal favours in return.

It was a dreadfully hard winter. But for Alfred Cash's kindness (or unkindness if you will, for he, like the rest, was kind only to serve his own desires) I should have perished of cold and hunger. Hunger, cold, and gratitude caused me to transgress again; yet you and others like you urge us to repent, as if every breath we draw were not a sharp and bitter repentance.

Surely by the time you have read these pages, Hester, you will agree with me there is no way from the life we live in but by the gates of death. Death is the one friend women of our class know they can depend on. When we call him, he will come to us; and when our burdens grow heavier than we can bear, we will call. We have nothing on earth to regret, and nothing

in the future to fear. The worst that can be is already ours.

Forget me, Hester, as the dead are forgotten; for to all our past I am dead—dead—*dead*. You can never find me again. Farewell! Never again Emily Stanhope! never again Corallie King!

CHAPTER XIV.

RED LEAF ONCE MORE.

JULIUS had engaged our passage on the steam-boat Reindeer. The Master was now able to walk with the assistance of a cane. Though yet very pale and thin, every day increased his strength, and added a little to his colour and flesh.

On the next day the boat landed us at Red Leaf. Philip met us at the river's brink, assisted his master, and welcomed us back with his usual grave dignity.

The Master asked after his mother and cousin.

"They are as well as usual, sir," replied Philip, "and they will be the better for seeing you, sir."

As we entered the lawn on the front portico, we saw two slender figures. The one was the

Master's mother; the other, his cousin Clara. The latter flew to meet us. With wild joy she clasped the Master and kissed him; then she hung on the nurse Gilly, and wept with gladness. I also shared the impulsive greeting, but with less exuberant feeling. If Mrs. Devaseur's joy was less wild it was deeper. She also, I thought, was a little strange in her demonstrations towards Gilly. After pressing the Master to her breast, she clasped the nurse in a closer embrace, and kissed both her cheeks, as the tears fell from her eyes. Then, and not till then, did she press my hand in welcome, and lay a kiss on my cheek.

I felt a secret smart of dissatisfaction. Did they think the Master's return to health and home was more due to the slave than to me? I had fancied that, now *she* was gone from Red Leaf, Jealousy would cease to torture my heart, and yet, in the very first moment of my return, a pang was darted into my soul. Mrs. Devaseur sat in a chair on the portico; on one side she

placed the nurse woman, on the other was her son; she held in her own a hand of each, and in her eyes was a look of unutterable fondness. In the Master's eyes was also a look of such tenderness as words are too poor to express.

Was the Master mad? or was I suddenly crazed, that I should fancy the tenderness in his eyes was as much directed to the slave as to his mother? It was not gratitude I saw. Oh, no! not gratitude such as a master would give a faithful slave, such as a sick man might give his careful nurse. It was something different, and diviner.

The whole scene was so unlike what I had expected. A hundred times, in imagination, I had pictured to myself this meeting between mother and son, this return to Red Leaf of its Master, and the thanks that would be my due, the exquisite pleasure that would be mine—for *I* had brought him back, *I* had nursed him, *I* had saved his life, and *she* was afar off!

But even more perplexing became the conduct

of these people. The two children came rushing in. After boisterously embracing their brother, and staring at Gilly as if she were a stranger, Mrs. Devaseur said to them—

"Now go to our dear Miss Stanhope, kiss her, and thank her for all her goodness to your brother."

The children came and claimed my attention, but I was keenly perceptive of all that was going on between the others. Rose, Mammy Milly, and other servants hastened to greet their Master, and welcome him home. All of these also eyed Gilly as if she were a stranger. Miss Clara Devaseur, after running to the library and bringing a stool for the Master's feet, again impulsively clasped the nurse in her arms as she sat by her aunt, kissed her cheeks, her forehead, and even the top of the turban she wore. Surely these women exaggerated the negro's work and underrated mine.

Gilly sat perfectly still, her eyes cast down on the white hand that clasped her own yellow

fingers, now and then raising that white hand to her lips in a mute caress.

"Bring a basin of water and a napkin," commanded Miss Clara of Rose, who hastened to obey. "Stand here," she ordered; and Rose took her place by the side of the slave nurse.

"Shall I do it now?" she asked, her white fingers fluttering over Gilly's turban.

"Do it," said the Master, with a grave smile.

Then, between her finger and thumb, Miss Clara Devaseur delicately pinched the extreme tip-top point of the turban, and carefully lifted it from the head of the negress. I half expected to find letters or bottles of quinine, articles Southern women were particularly fond of smuggling out of the city. Neither letters nor quinine were found under the turban; only a thick coil of dark hair, which loosened and fell to the waist in shining waves. Then Miss Clara lifted off the green goggles, and laid them aside.

"What strange transformation was this going on? Whose the silken hair under the negro's

wool? Tufts of the wool fell to the floor when the turban was removed, but hair hung from the head. The half-square kerchief was unpinned and flung to Rose, the coarse cotton dress was unbuttoned and slipped down from the shoulders, and still further down to the floor, disclosing a slender figure clothed in black—a figure I knew too well. Where had been my eyes? where my senses? What strange power had this woman, thus to blind and befool me for long weeks? She sat perfectly passive under the transforming hands of Miss Devaseur, who dipped a napkin in the basin and washed the yellow face of the slave—slave no longer, yellow no longer; but she—the peerless, the white, the beautiful!

This was the trust these people put in me—this their confidence! I suppose they feared I would give her to the Federals as a spy, or procure her imprisonment on some charge or other. What spiteful devil had blinded me so long? It seemed *they* thought the blindness affected, or pretended so to think.

"How admirably," exclaimed Miss Clara, "our dear Miss Stanhope humoured the strategy! Constance wrote us, never once did she betray a suspicion of the deception. Of course you saw through it, did you not, Miss Stanhope? But you thought it better, in case of any accident, *not* to know?"

And I assented. I would not let them think me so blindly stupid as I had been. I assented to their view of my silence.

CHAPTER XV.

LEBANON LONG.

ONE evening toward dusk a pedestrian stranger stopped at Red Leaf, and asked supper and a night's lodging. He carried a pack, which he opened on the piazza, exhibiting his few wares for sale. They consisted principally of pious tracts, cheap testaments, &c. The article on which he seemed most to pride himself was a specimen map of the Confederate States, for which he solicited subscriptions.

The especial merit of this map, of which he was especially proud, was that it was gotten up by a "good Southern man"—"No nigger-loving Yankee had a hand in it."

I could well believe it. It was as poor a map as one would wish to see—badly executed, badly designed.

Only myself, the two children, and Rosa, the negro girl, looked at his map, or listened to his descant on its accuracy.

The ladies of Red Leaf were not present, and the Master lay on a couch on the far end of the piazza, silent and thoughtful, as he usually was since the war had begun.

There was a rumour of Southern victories around Richmond — of fifty thousand slain Union men lying in the swamps and ditches. Southern victories did not elate the Master, though Southern losses deeply depressed. This rumour seemed to increase his sad thoughtfulness.

The pedler was a thin, meagre man, wearing a heavy black beard, long hair, well streaked with white, and spectacles. He was dressed in grey homespun jeans, a stuff generally worn throughout the South by citizens and soldiers.

Although feeling for him and his map a secret contempt, I lingered near this man. I hardly knew why. Perhaps something in the tones of his voice brought memories of childhood. Once

or twice I fancied he wanted to speak to me, but was checked by the approach of one of the children, or by the propinquity of Rose, who, from the corners of her dead black eyes, shot on the stranger glances of sly suspicion. He was invited to tea, during which his efforts at social conversation were not encouraged. Though the victories in the severe battles fought around Richmond were said to remain with the South, the slaughter of her sons cast a sadness on every house in her borders.

Despite my enthusiastic conviction of the final triumph of our Union cause, rebel successes never failed to fill me with despondency. The report that fifty thousand loyal men, slain in the seven days' fight before Richmond, now lay there—thousands yet unburied—wrung my heart with bitter grief. More than other loyal hearts mine suffered. I was cut off from the sustaining sympathy of friends. In and around Red Leaf I could only hear rebel predictions, rebel representations, the utterance of rebel hopes. It

rarely happened that a loyal newspaper ever reached Red Leaf. There was but little communication with the city of New Orleans, then the headquarters of Unionism in the South. At long intervals, a copy of the *Chicago Times* or the New York *Metropolitan Record* was smuggled through the Federal lines, to cheer on traitors in their wicked opposition to the best government on earth. In their hearts hating the abolition cause, these papers were but weaker echoes of Southern treason. I inwardly wondered that the loyal people of the North did not rise in their might and break such pestiferous presses into a thousand pieces.

In happier times it had been the custom of the Devaseur family, when the air was soft and balmy, to assemble on the verandah after tea for conversation, or music on the harp or guitar.

Harps and guitars were now unstrung, and pianos unopened. As if one thought moved each individual, they silently separated at the table, retiring to the privacy of their chambers—

the Master of Red Leaf leading his mother to hers, and often sitting by her couch until bedtime.

The pedler had picked up an old newspaper, and seemed unobservant of passing objects. I went out on the verandah, and seated myself under the shadow of the vines, looking out on the gloom of the night, on the few wan stars that shed a sickly light on the melancholy scene. A hand on my shoulder made me turn. In the dimness, in the darkness, I saw a man standing before me—the thin, meagre form of the pedler.

"Hush!" he whispered, looking warily around. "Do not speak, do not fear; you see a friend—Lebanon Long."

I would have sprung up, so great was my surprise; his hand on my shoulder held me down.

"Caution!" he said in a low whisper—"My life is at stake."

He asked me to meet him in some safe place, where we could converse with ease. He had much to say.

I suggested the river bank, under an oak

which made deep shadows. He went out and walked away in the dark. After a few minutes I stole out by a side door, going first into the garden, then round to the front lawn, and on to the oak I had indicated.

The gloom, the shadow, and the silence, the strange meeting, and the sudden surprise, so affected my imagination that I shrank from the man, who put out his hands for mine.

"If it were not too hazardous," he said, detecting my secret feelings, "I would strike a match and let you see the face of your old friend. No wonder you shudder at false whiskers and false hair. But we have no time to waste. Surely you do not doubt I am your father's, Hiram Stanhope's, old friend, and your old Sunday-school teacher?"

I told him I was satisfied, and asked after my father.

He had not seen him for a year; had been travelling in the South, working in the cause of freedom.

"How get you on in the great work, my sister?" he asked.

I told him my progress had not been such as I hoped. The negroes seemed content to await the coming of freedom, but not eager to go and meet it. I trusted though that I had sown seeds which some day would bring forth good fruit. Then I opened my pent heart, its despondency, caused by the cruel slaughter of fifty thousand Union soldiers in the battles around Richmond.

"We must expect," he replied, "to lose many thousand lives in this contest. What are the lives of the rank and file compared to the freedom of four million slaves? You must always bear in mind, my good sister, that the great majority of the soldiers slain, though Union men, are not zealous Abolitionists. Abolitionists you might well weep for. The country cannot afford to lose men of such stanch calibre. We must reserve them to carry out our measures after the rebel South is conquered. The North

can better afford to lose a hundred men than the South can afford to lose half-a-dozen. And America can better afford to lose a thousand Union soldiers than half-a-dozen soldiers of the Lord, who for years have preached and prayed against slavery, the child of Satan. The good work goes bravely on. Throughout the loyal States we keep up the cry, *Save the Union!* It fills our ranks, it rallies men around the flag. If fifty thousand loyal men enrich the soil of Virginia, as many of Virginia's black sons, equally as loyal, have fled to our free States, and will find homes in our midst. It is a fit compensation. We lose a white loyal soldier—we gain a black loyal citizen. As our armies penetrate toward the Gulf, these noble black men will flee from their slavish homes on the plantations, and join our armies or settle in the free States. Their depletion of the South's labouring class will not only bring their armed men to starvation, but their women and children. These 'she devils,' as Butler calls secesh women,

will then indeed grow hollow-eyed with hunger, and their children cry for bread. How happens it (he went on, after a pause), how happens it in this parish, where negroes are so numerous and whites so few, you have not yet stirred them to mutiny? Why, these slaves should arise and assert their freedom. They themselves should strike the blow. They are able. They should rise as one man and drive every rebel from the land. Have you laboured with them? Have you prayed with them? Prayer is a powerful stimulant to patriotic zeal. Do these blacks fully understand that the Union flag will protect them in any struggle they may make for freedom?"

I explained to him the many difficulties in my way; the indolent contentment of the Devaseur slaves; and how my energies had been fettered by an oath, forced upon me a year ago.

He made me carefully relate the circumstances of the oath. He reflected on it prayerfully. Then

he asked if my conscience held such an oath binding?

I answered that thus far I had observed it, though I often felt that a higher duty might make me break it.

Then he rose from my side. We had been sitting on the bulged root of the tree. He stood before me as he used to stand when addressing his Sunday-school scholars. He laid his thin hand on my uncovered head (I, too, had risen from my seat), laid it, as had been his wont in the old time, when as a child I sat under his spiritual teachings, and something of the old reverential feeling stirred in my heart—something of the old faith that he was a man of God, a light and pillar in the Church; but, more than all, a friend to the poor slave, a worker in the radical ranks. With the authority of one holding it from the Highest, with great solemnity, he said—

"I, a servant of the true and living God, through, and by the power He delegates to His

chosen servants, hereby absolve and free you, Hester Stanhope, from the evil thraldom of said oath. Conceived in wickedness, administered in iniquity, not for good, but for evil, I pronounce that oath utterly without force or weight. In the name of our martyr, John Brown, whose spirit is marching on at the head of our troops—a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of smoke by day—in his holy name, *his*, martyr, prophet, saint, I absolve you, Hester Stanhope, from that false oath. May the Lord of Hosts bless you and fructify your labours to His great glory. May He open and enlighten the slave mind to receive the teachings of His Word, and fire it with exceeding wrath against the rebels in the land—yea, to their utter defeat and destruction."

When I returned to the house all was still. A dim light burned in the hall. I went to my room, a great weight lifted from my heart. I felt increased courage, increased confidence in the final success of our army.

I had no second interview with Lebanon Long.

He left early the next morning, before the family was up. Doubtless he deemed it not quite prudent to tarry in a rebel house, in which was a rebel man.

About this time the Devaseurs, as the Pickards, and other neighbouring families, began to feel serious apprehensions of raids from the Union army. So severe was General Butler's rule in New Orleans, his very name filled the people with wholesome terror. The Master's health was so much restored, he held himself in readiness to fly at a moment's warning. He had given no parole, nor had Julius exacted any; and the Master felt himself at liberty to return to his rebel soldiers.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MARRIAGE.

It was announced one evening at the tea-table that the Master would leave on the following day. On the next morning, before I was up, Rosa came to my room from Mrs. Devaseur, and requested me to come down to the drawing-room. It was not fairly light. I hurried my toilet, trembling with excitement and apprehension. Was the long dreaded raid a fact? Was the Master again a prisoner?

The drawing-room was lighted as if for a festival. The sun was not yet risen; and the cold gray light of dawn was excluded by the heavy silken curtains. I saw an assemblage of all the house negroes, and some of the elder plantation hands, men and women. The overseer

and the Red Leaf family were the only white persons present, save an old man in priestly robes, Father Martin, a Catholic priest, who had been a frequent visitor in the neighbourhood, several of the wealthiest families being Catholic.

A table had been improvised into an altar, on which burned two wax candles before an ivory Christ on an ivory cross.

Lynn Devaseur sat on a sofa between his mother and Miss Gordon. Presently he rose, holding Miss Gordon by the hand. The two knelt before the priest and the altar, and the rite of marriage was performed according to the Roman Catholic ceremonial.

It was the saddest group ever assembled to see loving hearts united. Could it be otherwise than sad? Rumours of a coming battle were rife in the air, and the bridegroom would hasten to the battle-field. *His* heart was heavy with fears of insults and outrages to those he loved, yet could not defend. *Hers* was darkened by

forebodings of wounds, of death, from shot and shell, sword or bayonet.

Only Miss Clara made an effort to appear cheerful. Her effort was a failure. The smile she forced to her lips, as she kissed the cousins and wished them joy, suddenly changed to quivering, and she broke into tears.

But the bride did not weep. Her face presented the ideal of proud and patient resignation —resignation ready for any fate. Yet, in her aspect and her eyes I saw she was cursed with a clairvoyance of coming woe. She was lifted too high for tears; she was above the small rain-clouds of earthly life.

She smiled on her lover, her husband of a moment, as he bade her farewell, as he folded her to his breast and kissed her forehead and her eyes; but it was the saddest smile I ever saw.

The dread that death would embrace him before her loving arms, that the cold bosom of the earth would hold him before the warm

bosom of his bride, stole from her smile all the light of joy, yet left in it a tenderness deeper than any joy.

Before the parting was over I left the room. It was more than I could bear. I went out into the cold gray dawn. All the sorrow spread over the wide universe seemed centering and settling over this one household. *I* could not escape the general gloom.

Dis-ease of the mind, the nerves, or the heart, is contagious, as is *dis*-ease of the body. Who can come in contact with grief or woe, anger or any strong human feeling, without more or less catching such dis-ease of the emotional part of our being?

Though convinced that these people were punished according to the will of God, I could not help shuddering and shrinking as I saw black ruin overshadow the land.

Acting on a blind impulse to escape the sight of suffering because suffering was infectious, I rushed from that melancholy marriage scene,

heedless whither, so that I saw not the mournful faces under the roof of Red Leaf.

It was therefore with a shock I heard the galloping of horses' feet behind me. Looking back, I saw the Master coming rapidly on. My first impulse was to flee from his sight. I had sternly forced myself to shun him since the first day of our return from New Orleans. I would have broken to the woods like a run-a-way slave. But I could not. My knees shook; I grew icy cold, and leaned against a tree to steady myself.

Catching sight of me, he reined in his steed and leaped to my side. He took in his clasp my cold hand. His face was very grave, the tones of his voice full of deep feeling.

"In times like these," he said, "when friends part they should say farewell. We may never meet again on earth."

We walked slowly on. His horse followed close. Now and then with his nose he touched his master's shoulder in a mute caress.

"Even dumb brutes love him," was my secret thought. "Is it strange that I should?"

When he spoke again, it was of the dangers he dreaded for his household. He had wished the white family to leave Red Leaf, to seek safety with their relations in Kentucky. His mother was unwilling to give up her home; she trusted the slaves, they were kind and affectionate; she had no fear, save of devastation and spoliage by raiding parties. "The absence of the whites," he said, "seemed to irritate the invaders, causing them to desolate and destroy with increased activity. For these reasons, his mother and cousins were resolved to remain at Red Leaf, and submit to the chances of war."

I made no reply, and walked silently by his side. After a few moments, he resumed—

"He had never forgotten my kindness when his slaves were sick, and he could never forget it was owing to my care he did not die a prisoner in a Federal hospital. Might he hope I would

continue my gentle favour to the inmates of Red Leaf? Should the enemy come, might he hope my mediation would serve to soften the roughness, to molify the hate, a raiding soldiery might feel for a family whose head was a soldier of the South—a rebel and a traitor?"

I still spoke not. We slowly walked on through the silent woods, the horse following with his dumb caresses.

"He left home," he went on to say, "with the heaviest heart. Dark forebodings, foreshadowings of evil, haunted his mind. To reason them away was impossible—indeed, reason increased the sense of danger. It was impossible to shut his eyes or his mind to the dreadful possibilities of war. War means all the evils of life let loose. The negroes are now kind and attached, but what changes might be wrought in their impressionable natures it was hardly possible to predict."

After a moment's thoughtful silence, he turned on me his large eyes, which always seemed to

look through and through my mortal body, as if it were transparent as glass.

"And you," he said earnestly, "*you* will use your influence to make less bitter the hate of our foes? Is it not so? May I not rely on you as I did when sickness prostrated my people, as I did when death watched for me in the prison hospital?"

He looked down from his grand height—down into my eyes, which I lifted in a vain effort to answer him. I was dry and choked, and could not speak. He looked down into my eyes, which dumbly met his. A change slowly stole over his face. In the soul which looked into mine a new consciousness came. Did it come of the mute suffering he read in my eyes? Did he catch one short glimpse of the unhappy soul enslaved to his? Did a sweeter, tenderer pity than he had hitherto given me steal into his compassionate heart?

Down to mine slowly stooped his stately head, until his lips touched my brow; then, ere I could

get breath, he was in his saddle, flying down the road.

I had made him no answer, unless my face spoke one; my tongue could not.

The world spun around; the firm earth seemed loosened from her fastenings, swaying and swinging to and fro.

From that moment I knew that *he* knew the secret of my soul; and I knew that *he* did not scorn me for it, but had laid a kiss on my forehead which nothing could take away, which would there linger and lie until every atom of my body were crumbled to dust.

A revolution was wrought in my heart. Hope, which lay sick and faint in the low vales of despair, now leaped to life as by an electric flash. In the extravagance of her fantasy she flew to a sunlit summit, and looked forth toward a sunlit land, where wait fair and golden fruitions for the longing soul, and sweet waters for the thirsty, and joys such as this dull and disappointing earth never gives.

companion on the boat, and again in General Butler's office in New Orleans, Captain Martyr Pym.

If anything, his pomposity, his air of self-importance, had somewhat increased since last I saw this young man. He had dyed his slender moustache a deep black, which poorly harmonised with his pale brown hair.

Mrs. Devaseur, too agitated and trembling to leave her chamber—the young ladies kept theirs from pride—requested me to receive those unwelcome visitors. I was instructed to offer to the officers the hospitalities of the house, in the hope they would restrain their men from pillaging.

I met Captain Pym on the front portico. He recognised me at once, and seemed to feel no embarrassment at seeing me, evidently considering his temporary connection with my sister as not of the slightest significance one way or the other. He greeted me in a cordial, patronising way, congratulating me on my good fortune in

finding so lovely a place to live in. For my part I could not take it so lightly. I secretly disliked him on Emily's account, and felt for him a growing contempt on his own.

Captain Pym introduced me to his young companion, Lieutenant Reese, the very handsome young officer I had seen for a moment in General Butler's office. Lieutenant Reese had no memory whatever of me. It was very evident, I thought, that the inferior officer was a man of more force and elevation of character than his superior.

Captain Pym expressed great desire to see the ladies of Red Leaf, and hoped they did not mean to deny him that pleasure. I could give him no encouragement that he would be gratified by their society, knowing as I did how they disdained the soldiers of the Union. Only direst necessity had power to force Southern women to a show of politeness to Union officers.

The object of the raid was to capture rebels' cotton and enlist rebels' slaves. On the Deva-

seur place were nearly a hundred bales of cotton; on the Pickard's about the same number of bales. For several days the steamer lay at the landing. Every waggon in the neighbourhood was impressed into service to haul cotton to the boat. Half-a-hundred able-bodied negroes were collected from the Devaseur slaves and carried to New Orleans to swell the ranks of our loyal army. The Pickard plantation furnished a goodly number.

Although my instructions, begun two years ago, had somewhat prepared the slaves for the coming of this great event—this falling from their limbs of the manacles of bondage—yet in their benighted minds there were obstacles to overcome. They loved their home and their master, strange as it may appear. Before enlisting as soldiers, some exacted the promise that they "musn't be sot agin Mas Lynn; they would'nt be kotched shootin' again Mas Lynn no way in de world."

They were assured they were only wanted as

home guards to hold forts and prisons; not to fight.

When I saw the slaves marched off in a drove to the Federal boats, and the bales of cotton piled up on the boat's guards, I said to myself—"The looked for end is near, the pillars which upheld the proud aristocracy of the South are pulled down from under its whole structure; it must now topple and fall to the ground."

At one blow the Devaseurs, the Pickards, and other wealthy families lost slaves and cotton—these two things composed their wealth.

Captain Pym made Red Leaf his head-quarters, whence he sent scouts all over the country in search of concealed cotton and sugar.

One day quite an army of negroes, gathered from the surrounding plantations, was marched up to the Red Leaf door, and food demanded.

Mrs. Devaseur was struck dumb. The meat house, the store house, were already nearly emptied by the large demands daily made by Captain Pym's men. To feed this army of

blacks would leave the Devaseur slave-women and children quite destitute. Mrs. Devaseur returned answer, by Philip, representing the condition of her larder.

In less than twenty minutes every place, closet, and corner in the house were invaded by the soldiers, black and white, searching for anything they might covet. Some of the grey jeans garments intended for rebel soldiers—woven, spun, and sewed by the ladies of Red Leaf—were found, and roused the men to indignation. They swore they would burn the house to ashes.

Mrs. Devaseur lay on her bed, faint and exhausted by anxiety. Two men lifted her out on the mattress and laid her on the grass in the lawn, unwilling to see her consumed in the flames. I urged Captain Pym to restrain his men, and spare the house. I could but think he had secretly instigated the men to violence. He was more irritated by the injudicious pride of the ladies than the finding of rebel clothing.

While I was talking to Captain Pym, Lieutenant Reese stood by, a stern and angry expression in his white face. In the gleam of his dark eye I detected strong displeasure at the measures his Captain seemed bent on.

The two cousins, Miss Clara Devaseur and Miss Gordon, stood by their aunt giving her what comfort they could. I secretly suspected the younger of these ladies had inspired in the Lieutenant's breast so ardent an admiration it required but a spark to kindle it to love. As yet not a word, scarcely a look, had passed between them, but her lovely picture on the library wall, and the lovely picture she made on the lawn, or on the portico, as she walked for a breath of fresh air, were enough to fire the imagination of a young and susceptible man. Before setting fire to the house the soldiers proceeded to ransack and rifle it, seizing such articles as they desired to keep as the souvenirs of war or rebel spoils.

"These ladies," said Captain Pym to me,

"deserve no better fate. They hold themselves above Union soldiers; let them suffer. I will not raise a finger to save the house."

At the moment he uttered this sullen sentence Miss Gertrude Gordon was slowly approaching us. We were on the verandah. She came up from the lawn, where her aunt lay on the grass, and her cousin stood by the aunt's side. The Captain changed colour as she came toward us with peculiar and unequalled grace.

The Lieutenant bared, and bent his head as if to a queen, not to a woman conquered and thrown down from her high estate.

She stood before them in her rare beauty, and bowed her head slightly. The Captain had expected disdain; he only saw the most benignant sweetness. She simply asked him to be so kind as to protect the house from the rapacity of his soldiers.

He instantly complied. Calling an orderly, he issued strict commands that nothing should be disturbed. The soldiers were soon reduced to

order. Mrs. Devaseur was carefully carried back to her chamber.

Miss Gordon, with a white and composed face, looked on while the Captain was going hither and thither making the men restore articles of use or of ornament to their places in the house. Lieutenant Reese remained near her, his head yet uncovered. What he said to her I never knew; what he thought I believe I know.

When order was once more established, Captain Pym returned to Miss Gordon, an ineffable look of satisfaction, and expectation in his face. He said, "he had the pleasure of informing her that the house was freed of its troublesome visitors, and ready for the reception of its fair occupants."

I felt sure he expected a conversation with her; but she bowed her head in thanks and walked away. I waited to hear him break out in irritation at her persistent pride and avoidance. Not so: he was in raptures over her grace, her beauty, her elegance.

We dined in solitary state that day, as we had done since the arrival of the raiders. During the dinner I saw that something unusual was on the Captain's mind. His pale blue eyes were frequently turned to the door, as if expecting some one to enter. Presently he asked Philip if the ladies were too unwell to appear at dinner?

"They are much as usual, thank you, sir," replied that dignitary, with severe gravity.

A cloud gathered over the captain's brow. Lieutenant Reese could scarcely restrain the anger, and did not conceal the scorn, he felt at the unmanly petulance displayed by his superior officer. He listened to his complaint with averted eye and compressed lips.

Captain Pym, unconscious of his young companion's state of feeling, went on freely expressing his emotions. Though his vanity made him easily pleased, and rather slow to take offence, he was nettled at the obdurate pride of the ladies of Red Leaf.

"He had expected," he said, "*some* gratitude from these people, but it seemed they knew not the meaning of the word. But for *him* these ladies' house would now be in ruins and ashes, and they as poor as their own slaves. He had generously given them his protection, he had saved from destruction their magnificent house, and *this* was their return! Rebels were incapable of gratitude. Well, they should be forced to show the feeling, if they felt it not. It was due to the honour of the Government that these women should be made to respect its soldiers."

It was evident from the young Lieutenant's face and eyes that he strongly opposed these sentiments of his Captain. He ventured to argue, to remonstrate. He represented to the Captain that it was no part of their military duties to force themselves on the society of the ladies of the South. The Union had no war with women. Loyal men were banded together to oppose armed men, not unarmed

women and children. Brave *men* disdained a contest with weaker creatures, and *gentlemen* scorned to force themselves into any society when not wanted.

Captain Pym was irritated by the interference of his inferior officer, but did not seem to feel the keen sarcasm conveyed in the reproof administered. He justified his course by that of his General. It was the policy of General Butler, he declared, to reduce rebel women to submission. General Butler believed it as much to the interest of the Union Army to crush the spirit of secession in women as in men. For what had he issued order No. 28, which so enraged the women of New Orleans, but which had a wholesome tendency to curb the rebellious spirit of Southern women? Were not these words written on the wall in General Butler's office—"*There is no difference between a he and a she adder in their venom*"—a standing menace to rebellious women? General Butler was determined to use military force, and compel these women to show

proper respect to loyal soldiers; and he, Captain Pym, intended to inaugurate the same policy, and only Southern secesh, or Northern copperheads, would object.

Lieutenant Reese's eyes flashed; he rose from the table, a stern frown on his brow, looking fixedly in his officer's face. *I* thought he meant to strike, but, with a strong effort, he mastered his resentment, and strode out of the room.

After he was gone, the Captain burst out with great vindictiveness. He declared young Reese a copperhead and rebel sympathiser, who ought to be closely watched. "No truly loyal man would so study the interests of Southern secesh. The first duty of loyal men is to crush secession by all and every means."

"These secesh women," he continued, "must be made to respect Union soldiers. When they fail in respect, let them suffer for it; and he would thank me to see the Red Leaf ladies, and let them understand, once for all, that unless they wished to find their roof in flames over

their heads, they must show more respect to the Union flag, and the men that bore it."

I did not deliver this threat direct to Miss Gordon. I believed she would coldly and silently leave him to do his worst, preferring even to see the house laid in ashes to companionship with a nature so irreconcilable to her own.

I sought an interview with Miss Clara Devaseur, urging her, for the sake of her aunt, to induce her cousin to conciliate the vanity of this pompous little captain. She went to her cousin's chamber, and, after an interview of two hours, returned to me with the satisfactory announcement, that as the ill health of Mrs. Devaseur prevented her from presiding at the tea-table, Miss Gordon and Miss Devaseur would appear in honour of these unbidden guests. I hastened to find Captain Pym. He was in the library, walking up and down its length, "keeping company," as he sarcastically said, with a wave of his hand at the portraits on the wall, "with the ladies of the house."

When I told him the plan for the evening, his satisfaction was lively. Strutting before the mirrors, twirling his slender moustache, he seemed to admire himself with all the *naïveté* of a child. For several minutes he stood before a full-length mirror, surveying his small form, closely buttoned up in military style, smoothing his hair, and making the parting behind more exact, with all the air of a satisfied lady-killer.

And this was a *man;* was one of a sex supposed to be above the weaknesses of women! Lieutenant Reese watched his manœuvres with ill-concealed scorn. At breakfast that morning the Captain had almost determined to return to New Orleans on the next steamer. His departure was deferred at the prospect of seeing two beautiful women.

It was not without curiosity that I watched the exhibition of forced politeness on the part of such proud women, and their forced reception of gallantries they detested from a man they despised—a man, whose position as an officer,

under a great government, was all that entitled him to an atom of respect.

The tea bell rang. Captain Pym hurried in. Lieutenant Reese and I silently followed. Plates were placed for five. Captain Pym smiled with satisfaction as he saw the plates, and with fidgety impatience watched the door. The eyes of the younger officer were bent on the floor as he stood near the mantel with a martial bearing, a grave and almost stern face.

The two cousins came hand in hand. Miss Clara turned very pale, and trembled slightly, as the importunate little captain tripped forward to make his bow and wait on them to the table. Miss Gordon exhibited no sign of feeling whatever, slightly bending her head in acknowledgment of attentions. She seated herself as though nothing unusual was going on. Lieutenant Reese bowed respectfully, but spoke no word.

END OF VOL. II.